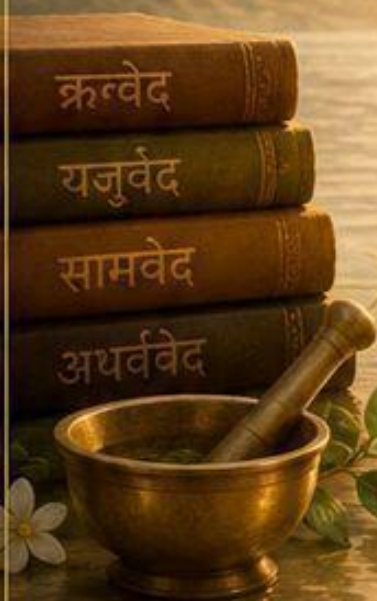


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SATVAVAJAYA CHIKITSA

A Holistic System of
Psychology and Healing



NIKOLAI BOND



Nikolai Bond

Sattvavajaya chikitsa

«Издательские решения»

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НЕЗАКОННОЕ ПОТРЕБЛЕНИЕ НАРКОТИЧЕСКИХ СРЕДСТВ,
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ВРЕД ЗДОРОВЬЮ, ИХ НЕЗАКОННЫЙ ОБОРОТ ЗАПРЕЩЕН
И ВЛЕЧЕТ УСТАНОВЛЕННУЮ ЗАКОНОДАТЕЛЬСТВОМ
ОТВЕТСТВЕННОСТЬ. Sattvavajaya Chikitsa presents Ayurveda's holistic
psychology of the mind, integrating Vedic philosophy, the gunas, memory,
discernment, ethics, and therapeutic practice. Written for students of Ayurveda and
integrative healing, this textbook offers a clear map of suffering, inner order, and
the restoration of sattva.

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Sattvavajaya chikitsa

Nikolai Bond

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SATTVAJAYA CHIKITSA

A Textbook on Holistic Psychology and Therapy in Ayurveda
English Translation

Translated from the Russian original by Nikolai Bond

Introduction. Why a Modern Student Should Study Sattvavajaya Chikitsa

This textbook is written for the student who wants not merely to learn new terms, but to learn to see the inner life of a human being through the language of Sattvavajaya Chikitsa, that is, the Ayurvedic therapy of restoring clarity of mind. For this reason, the book does not begin with a set of techniques or ready-made advice, but with the main question: what exactly suffers in a person, how does this confusion arise, and what can restore inner order?

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa belongs to an integral Vedic-Ayurvedic tradition in which the human being is understood as a unity of body, senses, mind, memory, discriminating reason, vital force, behavior, and consciousness. The very name must be understood at once: here *sattva* means clarity and inner balance, and *chikitsa* means treatment or therapy. Therapy here is not reduced to eliminating a symptom: it must restore the proper hierarchy in which the senses do not carry away *manas*, the perceiving and oscillating mind; *manas* does not subjugate *buddhi*, the discriminating reason; and *ahamkara*, the appropriating sense of “I,” does not substitute itself for the deeper Self.

The modern student especially needs such a map. He or she lives amid an excess of information and a deficit of inner support, knows words like “anxiety,” “trauma,” “self-esteem,” and “boundaries,” yet often does not understand what exactly happens to one’s own mind in the moment of being seized by an object, losing *smriti*, the inner memory of what is right, and weakening *buddhi*.

At the center of this textbook stands a simple but rigorous thought: suffering arises not only because of an external event, but because of the way one identifies with it. When the body, a role, an evaluation, success, trauma, relationships, or the fruit of action become the false center of inner life, *adhyasa*, false superimposition, arises; from it come *raga*, clinging attraction, *dvesha*, aversion and rejection, the loss of *smriti*, the inner memory of what is right, and mistaken action.

For this reason, Sattvavajaya joins philosophy and therapy. Ontology is needed here not for abstraction, but for understanding what in a person is foundational and what is merely changing content of experience. Anthropology provides the map of the levels of the human being. Diagnosis shows where the inner hierarchy has been disrupted. Practice helps return an object to its proper place and restore clarity.

Modern psychology has accumulated enormous experience and many useful methods, but in this textbook it is viewed as a collection of partial optics rather than a final integral map. Sattvavajaya does not reject these approaches, but places them within a wider context of the human being, *dharma* as the right order of life and action, the *gunas* as the basic qualities of psyche and nature, memory, discrimination, and consciousness.

The main pedagogical task of the book is for the student to emerge with four competencies: to know the basic terms and their function; to be able to see a human being diagnostically through the *gunas*, through *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahamkara*, and *chitta*, the deep field of memory and traces; to understand the therapeutic means of restoring *sattva*, clarity and inner balance; and to compare Sattvavajaya correctly with modern schools without eclecticism.

After studying the textbook, the student should be able to analyze a simple life situation or consulting situation through the map of Sattvavajaya: to separate fact from interpretation, identify the object that has seized *manas*, see the leading *guna*, recognize the participation of *ahamkara*, the loss of *smriti*, the weakening of *buddhi*, and the presence of *raga* or *dvesha*, and then propose a small action that returns the person to *sattva*, *dharma*, and a clearer choice.

The system is built step by step. First comes the historical and philosophical context, then the map of the human being, then the logic of suffering, then the language of diagnosis, and finally therapeutic algorithms, professional application, and the specialist’s final map. It is important not to

jump over these levels: without the map, the student will confuse terms; without practice, one will merely repeat them mechanically.

All major Sanskrit terms in the book are explained through function. Manas is not simply “mind,” but the perceiving and fluctuating center of impressions. Buddhi is not simply “intellect,” but discriminating reason. Smriti is not ordinary memory, but the retention of right knowledge under pressure. Adhyasa is not just a general “mistake,” but a false superimposition through which an object gains power over inner life.

In an axiomatic language, this logic can be compressed into the formula $X = 0 + A$, where 0 points to pure consciousness as the ground, A to the layers of adhyasa, and X to the conditioned “I.” But the formula is needed not for a game with numbers, but for pedagogical clarity: it should help the student see a living process rather than replace observation with a scheme.

This formula does not describe any real change in Brahman or pure consciousness and should not be understood as a literal mathematical operation. It serves as a pedagogical model for how a conditioned “I” arises in the field of experience through superimpositions of adhyasa. Pure consciousness does not itself become bound; bondage arises only at the level of mistaken identification.

The purpose of the textbook is not to make a person convenient or outwardly successful at any price. Its aim is deeper: to restore the inner order in which buddhi becomes stronger, smriti more stable, desires more mature, actions more precise, and a person stops completely losing oneself in every object of the world.

The book must avoid two errors. The first is to turn Sattvavajaya into a set of exotic techniques. The second is to dissolve it entirely into the language of modern psychology and replace precise terms with approximate analogues. For this reason, the textbook maintains a respectful dialogue with modernity while preserving its own language and its own integrity.

Terms are introduced only where they truly work for understanding psyche and therapy. Each new term is best read through four questions: what does it designate, where does it act in the structure of the human being, how does it appear in life, how does it become distorted, and how does Sattvavajaya work with it?

A special place belongs to adhyasa. In simple form, this is the situation in which a person takes one thing for another: the body for the Self, a role for essence, an emotion for truth, an object of desire for the source of fullness. The classical metaphor of the rope and the snake matters here precisely because it shows that suffering can be very real even when its center is built on a mistaken superimposition.

For this reason, one and the same thought will be repeated throughout the book: the world need not be denied, the object need not be demonized, and the feeling need not be violently suppressed. Each phenomenon must be returned to its proper place and not allowed to become the whole essence of the person. This is how apavada begins, the gradual removal of false superimposition.

How to Use This Textbook

The textbook is best read not as a reference book of terms, but as a consistently constructed program. The early chapters establish the foundation, the middle chapters teach the diagnostic language, and the later chapters translate understanding into the algorithms of therapy, consulting, and professional ethics.

Throughout the book it is useful to keep one and the same working template for analyzing a case: the fact; the object that has seized manas; the leading guna; what ahamkara appropriated; what smriti has been lost; how buddhi has weakened; what small action can begin apavada. If the student masters this template, almost all the chapters of the textbook can be linked together.

Each chapter is best studied in one rhythm: first key concepts, then the main exposition, then an example or case analysis, then the practical assignment and the review questions. On the first reading it is enough to grasp the map. On the second reading the connections begin to become clear. On the third, the book already starts working as a tool of self-observation and case analysis.

It is best to read the textbook chapter by chapter, without tearing separate terms out of the system as a whole. History is needed here to restore context, philosophy for foundation, anthropology for the map of the human being, diagnosis for the language of recognition, and the therapeutic chapters for practical work.

If a chapter seems too dense, one should not try to memorize all formulas and terms at once. It is more important first to answer four questions: what is this chapter about, what element of the map does it clarify, what does this look like in living experience, and how does it help in diagnosis and therapy?

Repeated reading is especially important in the axiomatic and therapeutic blocks. On the first pass the student sees the formula and the general idea. On the second pass one begins to distinguish how it unfolds in behavior, speech, attachment, error of reason, loss of smriti, and practical action.

The best way to test whether the book is becoming understandable is not to retell definitions, but to analyze real states: anxiety, dependence on evaluation, procrastination, resentment, bodily shame, fear of mistakes, anger, and attachment to the fruit. If the student can translate such a complaint into the language of Sattvavajaya without moralizing and without vagueness, the textbook has begun to fulfill its task.

Chapter 1. What Is Sattvavajaya Chikitsa?

Key Concepts: Sattvavajaya, chikitsa, sattva, manas, buddhi.

Let us imagine an ordinary situation. A person wants to change life: finish studies, restore health, build relationships, free oneself from dependency, return to practice, stop destroying oneself, or begin a task that has long been postponed. He understands what should be done, yet again and again remains inside the same circle. The mind becomes anxious, compares, spins fantasies, searches for excuses, reaches toward what is pleasant and avoids what is difficult, yet does not enter right action. From the outside this can easily be taken for a lack of discipline, motivation, or self-esteem. Sattvavajaya looks deeper: what happened to the mind, why did buddhi fail to hold direction, what object seized consciousness, what raga or dvesha governs behavior, what samskara, a stable imprint of previous experience, rose from chitta, where was smriti lost, and why was a temporary state taken for the self?

This view immediately distinguishes Sattvavajaya from the superficial advice to “pull yourself together.” It does not accuse the person of weakness, but neither does it justify unconsciousness. Psychic life is considered here as a lawful process. If the mind goes again and again toward an object, there is a cause for that movement. If discrimination is lost, buddhi is weakened or darkened. If a person chooses what is harmful while knowing what is beneficial, prajnaparadha, the error of discriminating reason, is acting. If one suffers not so much from the fact itself as from the meaning imposed upon it, adhyasa is working. If one cannot let go of the fruit of action, desire has become a hook. If the inner memory of what is right disappears, smriti requires restoration.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa is an Ayurvedic and Vedic system of working with the mind, directed toward the restoration of sattva, that is, clarity and inner balance, the strengthening of buddhi, the return of smriti, and the liberation of the person from the power of false identifications. Put more simply, it is a therapy that helps a person see clearly again, desire in a mature way, act rightly, and not lose oneself in the objects of the world. Yet such a definition remains incomplete if one forgets that Sattvavajaya rests on an integral understanding of the human being. It works not with a separate emotion, thought, or symptom, but with a disturbed inner order.

In Ayurveda, Sattvavajaya stands within a wider therapeutic context. Classical tradition distinguishes several directions of treatment. Yukti-vyapashraya is connected with rational means: nutrition, regimen, medicinal substances, procedures, and way of life. Daiva-vyapashraya is connected with the sacred, karmic, and ritual dimension. Sattvavajaya is directed immediately toward mind and consciousness. This does not abolish nutrition, medicine, regimen, or spiritual practice. On the contrary, it occupies its own place within an integral system. Its special field is inner governance, the restoration of clarity, and the work with desire, fear, memory, discrimination, and false self-identification.

The word sattva here should be understood more deeply than simply “goodness” or “purity.” In the language of the gunas, sattva is the quality of lightness, clarity, harmony, and transparency of perception. When sattva predominates, the mind is capable of seeing more accurately, reacting less blindly, remembering what is right, and following buddhi. When sattva weakens, rajas and tamas gain strength: rajas pulls toward restlessness, craving, impulsiveness, anxiety, and constant outward movement; tamas toward heaviness, confusion, denial, inertia, apathy, or mechanical repetition. Therefore Sattvavajaya is literally therapy directed toward restoring sattva, toward re-establishing the quality of clarity in which right knowledge and right action become possible.

The word avajaya points to overcoming or mastery. But crude understanding must be avoided here. Sattvavajaya is not a war of a person against one’s own mind. The mind cannot be healed by hatred of the mind. When a person begins to suppress thoughts, despise emotions, be ashamed of desires, and violently break oneself, one does not become more sattvic, but only intensifies inner

conflict. Mastery of mind means restoring the proper relation among the levels of the human being. Manas must perceive and transmit impressions, but not reign. Buddhi must discriminate and guide, but not become cold pride. Ahamkara is needed for practical personal functioning in the world, but should not appropriate the whole of existence. Chitta stores experience, but should not turn the past into a prison. The indriyas, the organs of perception and action, serve perception, but should not drag a person behind every object.

Chikitsa means treatment. But treatment in Sattvavajaya is not reduced to the removal of an unpleasant state. Sometimes an unpleasant state is a signal rather than an enemy. Anxiety may show that the mind has lost its ground. Anger may show that desire has encountered obstruction. Envy may show that a person has taken another person's fruit as the measure of one's own value. Apathy may show the accumulation of tamas and the loss of connection with dharma. Dependency may show that an object has become an external regulator of inner state. Therefore therapy begins not with suppressing the symptom, but with understanding its place in the system.

Western psychology often speaks of symptoms, mechanisms, patterns, attitudes, traumas, defenses, and cognitive schemas. These concepts may be useful, and Sattvavajaya does not require that they be rejected. But it asks a deeper question: who exactly has identified with this state? For example, a person says, "I am anxious." In modern speech this sounds ordinary. Sattvavajaya, however, clarifies: anxiety arose in manas, was intensified by rajas, was supported by imagination, was appropriated by ahamkara, and was written into self-description as "that is what I am." There is an enormous difference between the phrases "anxiety arose in me" and "I am an anxious person." In the first case the state can still be observed. In the second, the person has already fused with it. It is precisely this difference that has therapeutic significance.

Sattvavajaya constantly brings a person back from identification to discrimination. If I say, "I am my emotion," I lose freedom in relation to emotion. If I see, "an emotion has arisen in the mind, it has a cause, a quality, a movement, and consequences," then space appears. This space is not indifference. It is the beginning of buddhi, discriminating reason. Discriminating reason does not destroy the vitality of experience; it helps a person not be fully swallowed by it. Thus one learns to see: there is an object, there is contact with the object, there is an impression, there is the reaction of manas, there is the appropriation by ahamkara, there is the trace in chitta, there is the strengthening of raga or dvesha, there is the choice of action. Into this process one can intervene not with violence, but with clarity.

One of the chief principles of Sattvavajaya is that suffering is sustained not only by the external situation, but also by the meaning the mind places upon it. Two people may encounter the same event yet live through it in completely different ways. One sees an obstacle, another humiliation. One sees a lesson, another proof of worthlessness. One sees a temporary loss, another the destruction of the whole personality. This does not mean that external events are unimportant. Sattvavajaya does not deny the reality of pain, illness, loss, violence, poverty, or injustice. But it shows that the inner destiny of a person is determined not only by the event, but also by how manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and chitta enter into its experience.

For this reason, Sattvavajaya cannot be reduced to positive thinking. Positive thinking often tries to replace an unpleasant thought with a pleasant one. Sattvavajaya does not decorate illusion. If a rope has been taken for a snake, one should not convince oneself that the snake is kind or useful. One must see that it is a rope. So too in the psyche: one should not persuade oneself that dependency is freedom, fear is intuition, attachment is love, apathy is humility, or pride is dignity. The phenomenon must be discriminated correctly. Where there is raga, one should see raga. Where there is dvesha, dvesha. Where there is adhyasa, superimposition. Where there is prajnaparadha, an error of reason must be acknowledged. Only after that does healing become possible.

In this sense, Sattvavajaya is a very sober system. It does not offer a person escape from life into a beautiful spiritual idea. On the contrary, it returns one to reality. If there is a body, it must

be cared for. If there is illness, it must be treated. If there is a duty, it must be fulfilled. If there are relationships, one must act honestly within them. If there is desire, it must be examined and passed through buddhi. If there is fear, it must be understood, not masked. If there is attachment to the fruit, attention must be returned to action. If there is tamas, energy must be raised. If there is rajas, direction must be purified. If there is sattva, it must be strengthened.

Sattvavajaya is not a rejection of the world. This is important to emphasize. Spiritual systems are sometimes mistakenly understood as calls to withdraw from activity, relationships, profession, money, body, and social obligations. But in the therapeutic sense, Sattvavajaya does not require an ordinary person to destroy one's life. It teaches a person to live without losing the inner center. A person may work, love, create, study, earn, raise children, build a home, run a project, treat people, speak publicly, make mistakes, and correct them. The question is not whether there are objects in life, but whether an object has become one's master. The question is not whether desire exists, but whether it has become a hook. The question is not whether a person acts, but whether one acts from dharma or from inner dependency.

For the student of Sattvavajaya Chikitsa, it is important to understand that this system begins with self-observation. It cannot be studied only externally. If the student reads about manas, one must begin to see one's own manas. If one studies buddhi, one must observe when buddhi is clear and when it is clouded. If one studies ahamkara, one must notice where "mine," "they owe me," "how could they do this to me," "I must be this way," or "without this I am nobody" become active. If one studies chitta, one must see repeating traces of the past. If one studies the gunas, one must learn to distinguish sattva, rajas, and tamas in oneself not as theory, but as daily states.

In therapeutic practice, Sattvavajaya can be represented as several sequential movements. First, a person stops and acknowledges the present state. Then one distinguishes what object has seized the mind and what raga or dvesha has already arisen. After this one looks at what ahamkara has appropriated: what image of oneself is now being defended, and why incompleteness arose without the given object. Then buddhi is engaged: is this object really the source of fullness, does this desire correspond to dharma, what action is beneficial now and what is harmful? Then smriti is restored, that is, the memory of the right understanding of oneself and the situation. Only after this comes action, not from panic, shame, or blind attraction, but from a clearer center.

A simple example can be given. A student sees another person's success in social media and feels heaviness, envy, anxiety, and irritation. On the surface one may say, "I have low self-esteem." That is not necessarily false, but it is not enough. Sattvavajaya analyzes the process more deeply. Vision comes into contact with the object. Manas fixes the image of another person's fruit. Ahamkara compares: "he has it, I do not, therefore I am worse." In chitta an old samskara of inferiority is activated. Raga arises toward another's fruit and dvesha toward one's own position. Rajas intensifies unrest, tamas adds powerlessness. Buddhi temporarily loses clarity and stops seeing the nearest right action. Smriti is disturbed: the person forgets that one's path is not equal to another's image. The therapeutic step does not consist in the simple advice "do not envy," but in returning the object to the place of an object, restoring buddhi, and asking: what in my dharma am I to do now?

Thus Sattvavajaya turns psychology from a set of explanations into a practice of returning to action. It does not leave a person in endless analysis. If understanding does not lead to greater clarity, greater responsibility, more appropriate action, and a lessening of the object's power, then that understanding remains incomplete. In this sense Sattvavajaya is highly practical. Its task is not only to explain why a person suffers, but also to show how that person can restore order.

In what follows, we will study every part of this system in detail. But already now a first working definition can be fixed:

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa is an integral system of Vedic psychology and therapy directed toward restoring clarity of mind, the strength of discriminating reason, the memory of one's deeper nature, and the capacity to act without dependency upon the objects of desire and fear.

This definition will need to be expanded. But for the beginning it is sufficient. It shows that Sattvavajaya works not only with emotions, not only with thoughts, not only with behavior, and not only with the body. It works with the person as a whole. For this reason it can serve as the basis of a full textbook for students who want to understand not isolated techniques, but the very logic of the healing of the mind.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 1

Over the course of one day, observe the states in which the mind loses clarity. Choose one episode and analyze it in writing through the following questions: what object attracted or repelled the mind; what reaction arose, raga or dvesha; what did manas say; what did ahamkara appropriate; did buddhi preserve the capacity to distinguish the beneficial from the harmful; was smriti lost; what action would have been more appropriate?

Review Questions

- Why is Sattvavajaya Chikitsa not reducible to relaxation or self-control?
- What does the word sattva mean in the context of psychology?
- What is the role of buddhi in the therapy of the mind?
- How does desire differ from the hook of desire?
- Why is the symptom not always the root of the problem?
- What is adhyasa in a simple psychological sense?
- Why can Sattvavajaya not be regarded as merely an ancient version of modern psychotherapy?
- How are manas, ahamkara, chitta, and buddhi related in the arising of suffering?
- Why is the restoration of smriti a therapeutic task?
- What does it mean to “return an object to the place of an object”?

Brief Summary

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa is a system for restoring the inner order of the human being. It proceeds from the view that suffering arises not only from outer circumstances, but from false identification, loss of discrimination, seizure of the mind by objects, weakening of buddhi, and loss of smriti. Its goal is to restore sattva, return clarity to the mind, strengthen discriminating reason, and teach the person to act from an inner center rather than from bondage to desire, fear, role, or fruit.

Chapter 2. The History of Psychology as the History of the Search for Wholeness

Key concepts: history of psychology, wholeness, continuity, Vedic anthropology, crisis of fragmentation.

The history of psychology is often presented as a path leading from European philosophy to the university science of the nineteenth century. For the history of psychology as an academic discipline, this is useful. But for understanding the human being, it is not enough. If we remain within this line alone, the student may begin to think that systematic knowledge of the mind, suffering, memory, and inner freedom appeared only together with the laboratory, although the central subject of psychology existed long before laboratory psychology emerged.

Therefore, in this textbook history is needed not as a reference section, but as a restoration of continuity. The student must see that the question of the human being was deeply developed outside the European academic tradition as well, especially in India, where the Vedas, the Upanishads, the darshanas, Yoga, Vedanta, and Ayurveda formed a connected science of inner life.

2.1. Why the History of Psychology Cannot Begin Only with the Nineteenth Century

Textbooks on the history of psychology often say that scientific psychology began in 1879, when Wilhelm Wundt opened his experimental laboratory in Leipzig. For the history of psychology as an academic discipline, this is an important milestone. But for the history of knowledge about the psyche, this date is not sufficient: the human being reflected on his inner nature, suffering, memory, and freedom long before the appearance of laboratory psychology.

If psychology is understood only as a laboratory discipline, its history will indeed appear short. But if psychology is understood as the science and practice of human inner life, then this history begins much earlier. It begins wherever a human being first distinguishes the body from the one who is aware of the body, desire from the one who notices desire, thought from the one who sees thought, suffering from the one who seeks its cause. Such psychology did not yet possess statistics, tests, or laboratory equipment, but it already had its main object: the human being as a being who experiences, suffers, knows, and searches.

Experimental psychology brought much precision. It learned to study perception, attention, memory, behavior, development, emotions, and the brain. But along with this, it often narrowed the object itself. The soul became an inconvenient word, consciousness became a difficult problem, and the subject became something too elusive for measurement. Thus arose the crisis of wholeness: psychology became stronger in particulars, but not always in its general image of the human being.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa proposes that the history of psychology should begin not with the question, “When did psychology become an experimental discipline?”, but with a deeper question: “When did the human being begin to systematically investigate the nature of consciousness, mind, suffering, and liberation?” With this formulation, the ancient Indian tradition is not a periphery, not a religious background, and not an exotic supplement to Western psychology, but one of the most important centers in the world history of psychological thought.

2.2. History as the Restoration of Just Continuity

The history of science is always connected with the struggle against forgetting. When we do not know our predecessors, modern ideas begin to appear self-generated. When we do not study ancient systems, it is easy to mistake new terms for new discoveries. When we do not understand how different civilizations described the human being, we begin to regard our own scientific culture as the only measure of truth.

The History of Medicine notes that new historical facts require a revision of previous views if those views were built on incomplete knowledge. It directly states that the sacred books of India shed light on remote Asian antiquity and opened up a range of facts capable of requiring a new order of exposition and a rejection of earlier convictions. For a textbook on Sattvavajaya, this becomes a methodological principle: we should not write the history of psychology as if India had no science of the human being. We must restore the line in which psychology had not yet been separated from philosophy, medicine, ethics, yoga, and spiritual discipline.

Such restoration does not mean that the achievements of the West should be denied. It would be a mistake to oppose the “wise East” and the “misguided West” in a primitive form. Western psychology has produced a vast number of methods, studies, and clinical observations. But its historical limitation lies in the fact that it often developed through the dissection of the human being into separate measurable parts. Sattvavajaya is significant precisely because it preserves a holistic map: consciousness, mind, body, senses, memory, reason, ego, action, gunas, dharma, and liberation are considered as interconnected levels of a single system.

Therefore, the historical task of this textbook is not to prove that “everything was only in India,” but to show that without India the history of psychology is incomplete. If we exclude the Vedas, the Upanishads, Yoga, Samkhya, Vedanta, and Ayurveda, we lose an entire layer of the ancient science of the inner human being. We lose a language in which manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, smriti, raga, dvesha, avidya — ignorance of one’s true nature — adhyasa, and viveka — the discriminating capacity to see the true and the false — are not a set of beautiful words, but a coherent system for understanding the psyche.

2.3. Ancient India as a Civilization of Inner Knowledge

Ancient India is important for this study not merely as a source of texts, but as a civilization in which medicine, philosophy, ethics, yoga, education, and way of life considered the human being together. For the student, this matters for one simple reason: Sattvavajaya did not grow out of a single technique for calming the mind, but out of a holistic science of the human being.

If medicine already considered the human being in connection with the body, daily regimen, morality, education, and cosmology, then work with the mind within such a culture could not be reduced to a narrow correction of behavior. From this follows the main conclusion for the student: from the very beginning, Sattvavajaya thinks of the psyche within a broader map of life.

The Vedic and Ayurvedic tradition sees the human being in several dimensions. He has a body, but is not reducible to the body. He has senses, but is not identical with the senses. He has a mind, but is not merely the mind. He has memory, habits, tendencies, desires, and fears, but is not exhausted by them. Within him there is a discriminating reason capable of seeing what is beneficial and harmful, true and false, temporary and stable. Within him there is ahamkara, which creates the sense of “I” and appropriates experience. And within him there is a deeper ground of consciousness, without which no experience at all would be possible.

It is precisely this multi-layered view that makes Sattvavajaya a complete psychological system. It does not simply tell a person: “calm down,” “think positively,” “get rid of the symptom,” or “change your behavior.” It asks: where has the inner hierarchy been disturbed? Why did manas run after the object? Why did buddhi fail to hold discrimination? What did ahamkara appropriate? What samskaras and vasanas — hidden tendencies formed from previous experience — rose from chitta? Which guna became dominant? Where was smriti lost? How can the mind be returned to sattva?

2.4. India, Greece, and the Question of Medical Continuity

The history of psychology and medicine cannot begin only with the Greek line, as if before it there had existed merely scattered observations. Ancient India possessed a developed system of medicine, philosophy, ethics, psychology of the mind, and medical education long before the final formation of European academic science. For Sattvavajaya this is especially important: work with the mind did not arise on the periphery of Ayurveda, but within a mature civilization that already viewed the human being as a unity of body, senses, mind, behavior, memory, discrimination, and the highest aim of life.

Historical surveys of ancient medicine emphasize that systematic medical works existed in Hindustan in a very early period and that a significant body of medical knowledge had been accumulated before the age of Hippocrates. The Sanskrit tradition pointed to the original Ayurveda, from which the classical treatises then developed. This is important not for an argument about priority, but for the restoration of a fair historical picture: India was not a late commentator on someone else's science, but possessed its own ancient system of knowledge about the human being.

India was also connected with the history of Greek medicine through trade and cultural contacts. In the historiography of medicine, it has been repeatedly noted that ancient *Materia Medica* knew plants and substances of Eastern and Indian origin: sesame, moringa, cardamom, amomum, cinnamon, jatamansi valerian, boswellia, black and long pepper, ginger, cassia, nard, and aromatic calamus. These examples do not prove that one system crudely copied another, but they do convincingly show that the ancient medical world was connected through the exchange of substances, knowledge, and practices.

No less important is the question of the similarity between the Greek humoral theory and the Ayurvedic model of the doshas. Here caution is required. It would be incorrect to mechanically assert that one system simply copied the other. But it would be just as incorrect to ignore the very fact of similarity: both Greek and Ayurvedic medicine understood health as a balance of internal principles and connected illness with a disturbance of proper measure. At the same time, the Ayurvedic model of the doshas is included in a much broader system, where bodily processes are connected with the gunas, lifestyle, ethics, the state of the mind, and therapeutic discipline.

After the campaigns of Alexander the Great, Greco-Indian contacts became even more visible. Greek and late antique authors described the meetings of Alexander and his circle with Indian sages, whom they called gymnosophists. These narratives are important not as legendary embellishments of historical narration, but as testimony that the Greeks saw India not only as a geographical country, but also as a civilization of wisdom, asceticism, philosophy, and inner discipline.

Historical facts should not be turned into a simplified scheme, as if all Greek medicine were a direct borrowing from India. But it is equally wrong to write the history of medicine and psychology as if India were peripheral and did not participate in the formation of ancient knowledge about the human being. It is more accurate to speak of an ancient, independent, and highly developed Indian system; of trade and intellectual contacts; of the similarity of medical models; and of possible lines of continuity that require careful study.

If Indian medicine was holistic and included the body, mind, lifestyle, morality, the education of the physician, and the discipline of the student, then Sattvavajaya must be viewed not as a late psychological technique, but as part of an ancient system of holistic knowledge about the human being.

2.5. From Wholeness to Fragmentation

The history of psychology may be read as the history of the gradual fragmentation of the image of the human being. In ancient systems, the human being was often understood as a unity of the bodily, the psychic, the moral, the cosmic, and the spiritual. Greek philosophy also discussed the soul, virtue, reason, passions, education, and the meaning of life. But in the modern period, European thought increasingly separated subject and object, the inner and the outer, spirit and matter. This separation had its reasons: science strove for precision, verifiability, and freedom from dogmatism. Yet in psychology it produced a particular difficulty: the inner subject was more and more often treated as an obstacle to research.

The Cartesian line, expressed in the formula “I think, therefore I am,” placed thinking at the center of the proof of being. But the Vedic tradition thinks differently: first there is being, consciousness, presence, and thinking already arises within them. A human being does not exist because he thinks; he is able to observe thoughts precisely because he is not reducible to them. This difference is fundamental. If thinking becomes the foundation of the human being, psychology gradually concentrates on functions, processes, schemes, and operations. If consciousness is the foundation, then it becomes necessary to ask not only how thoughts work, but also who is aware of them.

Modern psychology developed largely through specialization. This was necessary: it is impossible to build a holistic science of the entire human being all at once. Perception, memory, emotions, behavior, development, motivation, personality, the unconscious, speech, the brain, and social influences had to be studied separately. But over time, specialization began to be perceived as the norm of science itself, and the whole started to disappear from view. In the logic of Sattvavajaya, this resembles a mosaic: emotions, cognitions, behavior, and neurophysiology are studied separately, while the question of who exactly experiences all this, and what unites these levels into one human existence, is heard less and less often.

Sattvavajaya returns this question. It does not deny the usefulness of specialized research, but places it within a larger map. Behavior is important, but behavior does not exhaust the human being. Thoughts are important, but thoughts are not the whole psyche. The body is important, but the body does not fully explain consciousness. Biography is important, but a human being is more than his history. The social environment is important, but it does not cancel inner discrimination. Sattvavajaya does not discard the parts; it restores their place within the whole.

2.6. Sattvavajaya as the Restoration of Holistic Psychology

To understand Sattvavajaya as a holistic system of psychology, one must see that a complete theory of the human being must answer not only the question of the symptom, but also the questions of the nature of the human being, the psyche, suffering, disorder, restoration, the result, and the qualities of the specialist himself.

Many modern schools reveal only separate sides of this picture. Psychoanalysis studies unconscious conflicts, behaviorism studies behavior, cognitive psychology studies thinking and distortions, while humanistic and existential psychology study personality, meaning, and freedom. All of this is important, but it does not always form a single anthropological and ontological system.

Sattvavajaya is initially situated within such a system. Here the human being is understood not as a set of symptoms, reactions, or cognitive schemas, but as a multi-level unity of body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, smriti, gunas, samskaras, vasanas, dharma, and consciousness.

Suffering is not explained only by emotional discomfort, conflict, cognitive error, or biochemical disturbance. It arises when a person loses correct knowledge of himself and identifies with the body, a role, an emotion, a desire, a fear, a trauma, another person's opinion, the fruit of action, or an image of the future. Thus adhyasa arises — false superimposition. From it raga and dvesha are born, smriti is disturbed, buddhi is weakened, manas loses stability, and the person begins to live not from the center, but from the object.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya does not need to be completed by modern schools, although it can enter into respectful dialogue with them. It has its own teaching on chitta, samskaras, and vasanas; its own understanding of buddhi, viveka, and prajnaparadha; its own connection between dharma, moksha, and the highest aim of human life. Modern methods may be useful instruments, but they must not replace holistic Vedic anthropology.

The wholeness of Sattvavajaya is expressed in the fact that it explains who suffers, why the mind loses clarity, how the object gains power over manas, how ahamkara appropriates experience, how samskaras rise from chitta, how raga and dvesha reinforce dependence, how buddhi weakens, and how smriti returns a person to correct knowledge. Therefore, Sattvavajaya is not a set of techniques, but a system for restoring inner order.

For the student, this means one simple thing: Sattvavajaya should be studied not as an exotic supplement to modern psychology, but as an independent map of the human being. Modern schools help us see individual aspects; Sattvavajaya teaches us to see the whole.

2.7. The History of Psychology as the History of Forgetting and Return

If we look more deeply, the history of psychology may be described as a movement between two poles: the forgetting of wholeness and attempts to restore it. At first, the human being is perceived as part of the cosmos, dharma, moral order, and spiritual reality. Then, in the history of science, analytical separation becomes stronger: body separately, soul separately, mind separately, behavior separately, brain separately, society separately. This separation makes it possible to study many things, but gradually creates the illusion that the human being really consists of disconnected parts.

Then attempts at synthesis appear. Psychoanalysis tries to connect the conscious and the unconscious. Humanistic psychology restores the value of personality. Existential psychology reminds us of meaning, freedom, and death. Transpersonal psychology tries to move beyond the limits of the ego. Integral approaches strive to gather different levels of human experience. But all these attempts often remain late reconstructions. They try to restore the whole after it has already been cut into parts.

Sattvavajaya is important because it does not reconstruct wholeness anew, but proceeds from it. For Sattvavajaya, the human being is originally not a set of fragments, but a unified system in which body, prana, senses, mind, reason, memory, ego, actions, and consciousness are interconnected. Therefore, Sattvavajaya does not merely add “spirituality” to psychology. It changes the very starting point. Psychology must begin not with the symptom and not with behavior, but with a correct understanding of the human being.

Therefore, in this textbook the history of psychology will not be a simple chronology of schools, but the history of a question: how humanity understood the inner nature of the human being, and why modern science, having achieved enormous precision in particulars, again needs a holistic map. In this history, Sattvavajaya occupies a special place because it connects antiquity and modernity: on the one hand, it rests on the Vedic and Ayurvedic tradition; on the other, it can be presented in a modern educational language, with diagnostics, methodology, practice, and even an axiomatic model.

2.8. What Historical Understanding Gives the Student

It may seem to the student that history is a distraction from practice. He wants to receive methods immediately: how to work with anxiety, anger, desire, addiction, trauma, fatigue, and relationships. But without history he will not understand why Sattvavajaya is structured precisely in this way. He will perceive it as a set of terms, rather than as the result of a great tradition. History is needed in order to see the roots of the method.

When the student understands history, he stops thinking that modern psychology is the only possible form of knowledge about the human being. He sees that it is possible to think differently: not from symptom to technique, but from the human being to the cause of suffering; not from behavior to correction, but from consciousness to the restoration of order; not from fragment to fragment, but from the whole to its parts. Then Sattvavajaya ceases to appear exotic and becomes a system.

History also protects against superficial syncretism. Without historical depth, a person easily mixes everything with everything: a little Ayurveda, a little CBT, a little meditation, a little coaching, a little neuroscience, a little esotericism. The result is not wholeness, but a mixture. True wholeness requires a root. In Sattvavajaya, this root lies in the Vedic understanding of consciousness, in the Ayurvedic model of the human being, in the teaching of the gunas, in the distinction between Atman — the deep witnessing Self — and anatman, that is, the non-Self, and in the practice of restoring sattva and smriti.

Finally, history helps the student respect the language of the tradition. Replacing Sanskrit terms with Western analogues may lead to semantic deformation: Atman is not simply “consciousness,” buddhi is not simply “intellect,” sattva is not simply “kindness” or “calmness.” Historical understanding shows why the terms must be preserved. They are not decorations, but carriers of an entire system of distinctions.

2.9. Conclusion of the Chapter

The history of psychology as the history of the search for wholeness shows that the modern science of the human being should not confine itself to the last two centuries of the European academic tradition. Laboratory psychology, psychoanalysis, behaviorism, cognitive science, and neuropsychology are important, but they do not exhaust the history of knowledge about the human being. Before them, there existed developed systems of understanding the mind, consciousness, suffering, desire, memory, self-control, and liberation. Among them, the Vedic and Ayurvedic tradition holds a special place.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa must be studied precisely within this historical context. It is not an accidental technique that appeared on the margins of Ayurveda. It is a holistic psychological system in which history, philosophy, anthropology, epistemology, ethics, diagnostics, and therapy form a single field. Its task is to restore not only mental health in the narrow sense, but also the correct understanding of the human being as a being in whom body, mind, memory, reason, and consciousness must be brought into a coherent order.

History is necessary for the student so that he may understand: Sattvavajaya is not a past that must be preserved as a museum object, but an ancient holistic system capable of giving modernity what it increasingly lacks: a unified map of the human being.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 2

Write a short one-page essay: “Why the history of psychology cannot begin only with Wundt and the European laboratory tradition.” In the essay, it is important to show that modern academic psychology is an important stage, but not the beginning of knowledge about the human being. Then give three reasons why the Vedas, the Upanishads, Ayurveda, and Sattvavajaya should be included in the broader history of psychology.

Review Questions

- Why is the history of psychology not reducible to the history of experimental psychology?
- What methodological error is created by a West-centered presentation of the history of science?
- Why is the ancient Indian tradition important for understanding psychology?
- What is the difference between a holistic system and a set of separate methods?
- Why is modern psychology experiencing a crisis of wholeness?
- How does Sattvavajaya restore the connection between philosophy and therapy?
- Why can Sanskrit terms not be fully replaced by Western analogues?
- How does historical continuity differ from simply quoting ancient texts?
- Why is Sattvavajaya not eclecticism?
- How does historical understanding help the future specialist work more deeply?

Brief Summary

The history of psychology should be understood as the history of the human search for an answer to the question of the nature of consciousness, mind, suffering, and inner freedom. Modern European psychology has provided important methods and research, but it is not the beginning of knowledge about the human being. The Vedic and Ayurvedic tradition contains a developed holistic model of the psyche, where the human being is understood as a unity of body, senses, mind, memory, reason, ego, and consciousness. Sattvavajaya Chikitsa continues this line and offers the modern student not a fragmentary technique, but a holistic map of the human being and his healing.

Chapter 3. Ancient India as a Civilization of Knowledge about the Human Being

Key concepts: Vedas, Ayurveda, darshanas, shastra, Sanskrit.

When we speak about ancient India in a textbook on Sattvavajaya Chikitsa, it is important to avoid two extremes from the very beginning. The first extreme is to look at India as a museum of antiquities, where everything is interesting only because it is old. The second is to perceive the ancient Indian tradition as a realm of myth, faith, and poetic images that has no relation to rigorous knowledge about the human being. Both positions obstruct understanding. Ancient India is important for us not because it is ancient in itself, and not because it is surrounded by an aura of mystery, but because it created one of the most developed civilizations of inner knowledge: knowledge of the body, mind, consciousness, suffering, liberation, education, way of life, and right action.

A historian of medicine, turning to Indian material, directly points out that the systems of Hindu philosophy and medicine should be considered without the “fetters of Western prejudices,” that is, they should not be forced in advance into European schemes or judged only by familiar Western criteria. For the history of psychology, this is especially important. If we assume in advance that real psychology begins only where there is a laboratory, statistics, an experimental protocol, and a university department, then we will not be able to see psychological knowledge where it is expressed in another language: through shastra, instruction, the practice of self-observation, discipline of the mind, ethics, medicine, yoga, and the philosophy of consciousness.

The ancient Indian tradition did not separate the question of health from the question of life, the question of life from the question of dharma, the question of dharma from the question of consciousness, or the question of consciousness from the final aim of the human being. Therefore, psychology did not arise here as a narrow discipline concerned with isolated mental processes. It was included in a broader system of knowledge, where the human being was understood as a multi-layered being existing simultaneously in bodily, psychological, moral, social, and spiritual dimensions.

3.1. Why India Is Important for the History of Psychology

In the Western tradition, ancient India was long viewed primarily as a source of religious ideas, myths, rituals, and metaphysics. But such a view is incomplete. Indian culture gave the world not only religious texts, but also complex systems of logic, grammar, medicine, philosophy, yoga, ethics, pedagogy, and inner discipline. In The History of Medicine, ancient Indian material is presented not as a random collection of therapeutic techniques, but as an entire professional and educational environment: it examines the ancient history of Indian medicine, the position of sages, education, the duties of teachers and students, the duties of the physician and assistants, physiology, cosmology, the microcosm, hygiene, surgery, pharmacology, and other sections. This shows that ancient Indian medicine was embedded in a broad understanding of human nature.

For Sattvavajaya, this has fundamental significance. The psychology of the mind could not have arisen in isolation from such a culture. If the physician had to understand the body, way of life, moral state, food, age, habits, environment, tendencies, and inner order of the human being, then work with the mind became a natural part of healing. It is not accidental that Sattvavajaya Chikitsa appears within Ayurveda: it is responsible for the level at which illness, suffering, and disorder in life are connected not only with tissues, organs, or nutrition, but also with how a person perceives, desires, remembers, chooses, and identifies.

The modern student is often accustomed to the separation of medicine and psychology: the physician deals with the body, the psychologist with experiences, the philosopher with meaning, and the spiritual mentor with the highest aim. In the ancient Indian approach, there is no such rigid rupture. Of course, distinctions between fields of knowledge existed, but they did not destroy the holistic picture. The human being was one, and therefore knowledge about him also strove to be unified.

3.2. Veda as Knowledge, Not Only as Religious Text

The word “Veda” means knowledge. For the modern reader, this must be emphasized, because the word “Vedic” is often perceived either religiously or esoterically. But in the context of Sattvavajaya, what interests us first of all is that the Vedic tradition sought to describe the order of reality and the place of the human being within that order. It asked not only how a ritual should be performed, but also what consciousness is, how the world of experience arises, why the human being suffers, what right action is, how the mind is structured, what the nature of desire is, and whether liberation from inner conditioning is possible.

In this sense, the Vedas and the texts connected with them may be regarded as one of the most ancient corpora of anthropological and psychological knowledge. Of course, this is not psychology in the modern academic sense. There are no laboratory scales, standardized questionnaires, or statistical samples. But there is something else: deep observation of the human being, linguistic precision of terms, practical discipline, the connection between knowledge and life, transmission from teacher to student, and the verification of knowledge through inner experience.

For Sattvavajaya, this is especially important. A human being is not understood here as an isolated individual cut off from the order of the world. He is included in *rita* — the order of truth and harmony, in *dharma* — the right order of life and action, in the order of the *gunas*, the order of *karma*, and the order of inner maturation. Therefore, the therapy of the mind cannot be merely technical. It must understand what kind of order has been disturbed and how this order can be restored.

The Vedic view of the human being is not built on the opposition of religion and science in the modern sense. For ancient consciousness, true knowledge had to be simultaneously correct, transformative, and liberating. To know meant not simply to possess information, but to see more clearly and live more correctly. In this sense, the Veda is not merely a collection of statements about the world, but a form of knowledge that is intended to change the knower himself.

From here follows an important pedagogical conclusion. When a student of Sattvavajaya studies the Vedic foundation, he must not look in it only for citations or authorities. He must learn to see the very way of thinking: the connection of word and experience, knowledge and discipline, psychology and way of life. Without this, Sattvavajaya may easily be reduced either to philosophy without practice or to practice without foundation.

The Upanishads are especially important. If the Vedas establish the broad sacred and cosmic context, the Upanishads turn attention inward. Their questions are extremely simple and at the same time radical: what is the foundation of the human being; what remains when the body, senses, thoughts, and states change; who is the witness of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep; what is *Atman* — the deep Self — and how is it related to *Brahman*, the absolute non-dual ground? These questions have not only philosophical but also direct psychological significance. If a person takes himself to be the body, a thought, an emotion, a role, or a status, his psyche becomes dependent on every change in these objects. But when he begins to distinguish the changing from the unchanging, an inner support appears, without which deep therapy is impossible.

This is why Sattvavajaya cannot be understood without Vedanta. Vedanta gives it its highest ontological horizon: the human being is not exhausted by psychological processes. But Sattvavajaya does not stop at a metaphysical assertion. It asks: how does this knowledge become therapy? How does it help a person who is anxious, angry, suffers from desire, loses memory of himself, acts against reason, becomes attached to objects, and destroys his life? The answer lies in the union of Vedanta, Yoga, Samkhya, and Ayurveda.

3.3. Shastra as a Form of Systemic Knowledge

To understand ancient India, it is necessary to correctly understand the word “shastra.” Shastra is not simply a “sacred book” and not merely an authoritative text. It is a form of systematized knowledge intended for teaching, transmission, and practical application. In shastra, knowledge does not exist separately from the discipline of the student. The text presupposes not only reading, but also assimilation, reflection, practice, verification, and transformation of life.

A modern textbook is also a form of shastra in the broad sense: it must not only communicate information, but also form a way of seeing the subject. If a textbook on Sattvavajaya simply gives a set of terms, it will not fulfill its task. It must teach the student to see the human being through the system of Sattvavajaya: where manas operates, where buddhi operates, where ahamkara operates, where chitta operates, where the gunas are active, where raga and dvesha appear, where adhyasa is present, where smriti has been lost, where prajnaparadha occurs, and where the restoration of sattva becomes possible.

In ancient Indian culture, knowledge was transmitted not as abstract information, but as a path of forming the human being. That is why the figure of the teacher is so important. The teacher did not merely explain the text, but introduced the student into a way of thinking and a way of life. In *The History of Medicine*, among the sections on ancient Indian medicine, special attention is given to the position and character of sages, education, the duties of teachers, the duties of students, and the duties of the physician and assistants. This shows that knowledge was understood as a professional, moral, and personal discipline. For Sattvavajaya, this is fundamental: it is difficult to heal another person’s mind if the specialist’s own mind has not passed through the culture of discrimination.

In modern education this is often lost. A student may learn the terms, pass a test, and receive a document, while his own manas remains scattered, his buddhi weak, his ahamkara painfully sensitive, and his chitta filled with old reactions.

A Sattvavajaya textbook must therefore not merely give knowledge about the mind. It must gradually reorganize the very way of observation.

If earlier the student saw before him an “anxious client,” now he must learn to see: what object has seized the mind; how manas is moving; what is happening with the breath and body; which guna predominates; how ahamkara has appropriated the situation; what samskaras may have been activated; where buddhi has weakened; what smriti has been lost; and what action would be sattvic. If earlier he saw “laziness,” now he must distinguish tamas, loss of dharma, fear of action, attachment to the fruit, depletion of prana, or hidden dvesha. If earlier he saw “desire,” now he must ask: is this a mature sankalpa, or is it the hook of desire?

This is precisely where the civilizational significance of the ancient Indian tradition for modern psychology becomes visible. It did not merely leave us ancient texts. It left us a way of seeing the human being as a whole.

3.4. Ayurveda as the Science of Life and the Human Being

Ayurveda is often translated as “the science of life.” This is not an accidental expression. It is not limited to treating illness after it has already appeared. It studies the conditions for preserving health, the causes of disorder, the nature of the body, nutrition, daily regimen, age, climate, behavior, hygiene, seasonal changes, moral life, mental states, and the path of restoration. Therefore, Ayurveda is originally broader than medicine in the narrow sense of the word.

In The History of Medicine, the Indian medical tradition is presented as a system that includes cosmology, the microcosm, physiology, the structure of the body, inclinations and temperaments, hygiene, pharmacy, medicines, surgery, and the medical profession. This list alone shows that ancient Indian healing did not think of the human being in isolation, but within a whole: the body is connected with the cosmos, way of life is connected with the state of the organism, the profession of the physician is connected with ethics, and treatment is connected with the understanding of nature.

Sattvavajaya occupies a special place within Ayurveda because it is directed toward the mind. In Ayurvedic logic, the mind is not an accidental addition to the body. The state of the mind affects digestion, sleep, immunity, behavior, relationships, the ability to follow a regimen, the course of illness, and recovery. And conversely, food, sleep, regimen, the sense organs, lifestyle, and environment influence the mind. Therefore, Sattvavajaya should not be understood as psychology detached from the body. It is psychology within the science of life.

Here an important principle appears: one cannot treat the mind while completely ignoring the body, and one cannot treat the body while completely ignoring the mind. A person living in chronic rajas may destroy the body through anxiety, haste, irritation, insomnia, and overload. A person immersed in tamas may destroy the body through inertia, overeating, immobility, denial of illness, and refusal to act. A person with a more sattvic mind more easily follows a regimen, better distinguishes the beneficial from the harmful, notices deviations more quickly, takes treatment more responsibly, and is less dependent on chaotic impulses.

This is precisely why Sattvavajaya is not an abstract philosophy, but a practical part of health. It helps a person restore the inner order without which external treatment often remains unstable. A diet may be prescribed, but if the person does not govern desire, he will break it. A sleep regimen may be recommended, but if the mind is seized by rajas, he will remain on his phone late into the night. The harm of a habit may be explained, but if buddhi is weak and vasana is strong, knowledge will not pass into action.

3.5. Darshanas as Maps of Reality

Indian philosophy developed not as an abstract play of the mind, but as a way of seeing reality. The word “darshana” is literally connected with seeing. Each darshana offers its own way of seeing the world, the human being, knowledge, suffering, and liberation. For Sattvavajaya, Samkhya, Yoga, and Vedanta are especially important, although the other darshanas also create the general intellectual background.

Samkhya helps us understand the distinction between Purusha — consciousness as witness — and Prakriti — nature and the field of manifested experience. For psychology, this means that a person must learn to distinguish the one who is aware from that which is being observed. A thought is observed; therefore, a person is not identical with the thought. An emotion is observed; therefore, a person is not identical with the emotion. The body is observed; therefore, a person is not reducible to the body. Such discrimination is not an escape from life. On the contrary, it allows one to stop blindly confusing oneself with every passing state.

Yoga gives the method of disciplining the mind. It shows that the mind has vrittis — fluctuations, movements, forms — which can obscure clarity. If the mind constantly revolves around objects, a person does not see himself or the world correctly. Practice is needed not for the sake of unusual states, but for stability, discrimination, and liberation from automatism.

Vedanta reveals the non-dual foundation of consciousness. It provides the highest framework in which Atman is not a temporary personal construction. For Sattvavajaya, this is especially important because without a higher understanding of the “I,” therapy risks being reduced to the improvement of the ego. A person may become more adapted, more confident, more successful, but not necessarily more free. Sattvavajaya seeks not merely to strengthen the personality, but to return it to its proper place in relation to the deeper nature of consciousness.

Thus, the darshanas give Sattvavajaya its philosophical foundation. Without Samkhya, it is difficult to understand the discrimination between consciousness and nature. Without Yoga, it is difficult to understand the discipline of the mind. Without Vedanta, it is difficult to understand the higher meaning of adhyasa and apavada. Without Ayurveda, it is difficult to understand the therapeutic application of all this to the living human being.

3.6. Sanskrit as a Language of Precise Distinctions

One of the reasons why Sattvavajaya is difficult to translate fully into the language of modern psychology is the special status of Sanskrit terminology. Sanskrit concepts are embedded in a coherent system of knowledge and preserve deep semantic precision; the same terms function in philosophy, psychology, and medicine, ensuring terminological continuity.

This is especially important for study. When we say “manas,” it cannot immediately be translated as “thinking.” Manas is broader: it perceives, doubts, fluctuates, reacts, and connects the sense organs with inner processing. When we say “buddhi,” the word “intellect” is not sufficient. Buddhi is the discriminating reason that sees right and wrong, beneficial and harmful, true and false. When we say “ahamkara,” we are not speaking simply of the “ego” in the Western sense, but of the principle of appropriating experience, which creates the sense of “I” and “mine.” When we say “chitta,” we do not mean a data storage system, but a deep field of impressions, samskaras, vasanas, and psychic traces.

Such a language makes it possible to see inner life more precisely. Modern people often speak in overly general terms: “I feel bad,” “I am anxious,” “I was overwhelmed,” “I am stressed,” “I have no resources.” These words can be useful for an initial description, but they are insufficient for diagnosis. Sattvavajaya teaches one to speak more precisely: what exactly happened? Has manas been seized? Has buddhi become obscured? Has ahamkara appropriated something? Has chitta brought up an old samskara? Has rajas intensified? Has tamas covered the mind? Has smriti been lost? Is raga leading toward the object? Is dvesha forcing one to flee? Such precision makes therapy deeper.

Sanskrit is needed in this textbook not so that the student may feel initiated into a secret language. It is needed for professional precision. Just as a physician must know anatomical terms, a specialist in Sattvavajaya must know the terms of the inner anatomy of the human being.

3.7. Sattvavajaya as the Heir to the Holistic Indian Science of the Human Being

If we bring all of this together, it becomes clear why Sattvavajaya cannot be viewed as an isolated technique. It inherits an entire civilizational line. From the Vedas, it receives the understanding of knowledge as a path to truth. From the Upanishads, it receives the question of the nature of Atman and consciousness. From Samkhya, it receives the discrimination between consciousness and nature. From Yoga, it receives the discipline of the mind and the method of inner concentration. From Vedanta, it receives the understanding of adhyasa and liberation from false identification. From Ayurveda, it receives the therapeutic context in which mind, body, way of life, and health are interconnected. From the shastric culture, it receives respect for the precise term, the teacher, the student, practice, and continuity.

Sattvavajaya may be described as a complete and holistic Vedic psychotherapeutic paradigm that includes ontological, epistemological, anthropological, ethical, methodological, logical-epistemic, terminological, historical-philosophical, diagnostic, and practical levels. This means that Sattvavajaya does not simply say: “work with the mind.” It answers a much broader range of questions: what the human being is, what consciousness is, how a person knows, why he makes mistakes, what constitutes the norm, what constitutes disorder, what the causes of suffering are, by what means order is restored, and how the specialist must apply knowledge in life.

Such an approach is especially necessary in our time. The modern person often receives knowledge in fragments: one thing from a physician, another from a psychologist, a third from a trainer, a fourth from a spiritual teacher, and a fifth from social media. These fragments may be useful, but without a single map they do not come together into a whole. Sattvavajaya gives such a map. It shows that the health of the mind is connected with the clarity of consciousness, the strength of buddhi, the purity of manas, the proper use of the indriyas, the state of the gunas, the memory of oneself, way of life, and dharma.

3.8. The Practical Significance of the Topic

It is important for the student to understand that when he studies Sattvavajaya, he is entering not a set of techniques, but a tradition of holistic vision of the human being. This requires a different attitude toward study. One cannot simply memorize definitions and consider the topic mastered. One must gradually reorganize the very way of observation.

If earlier the student saw before him an “anxious client,” now he must learn to see: what object has seized the mind, how manas is moving, what is happening with the breath and the body, which guna predominates, how ahamkara has appropriated the situation, what samskaras may have been activated, where buddhi has weakened, what smriti has been lost, and what action would be sattvic. If earlier he saw “laziness,” now he must distinguish tamas, loss of dharma, fear of action, attachment to the fruit, depletion of prana, or hidden dvesha. If earlier he saw “desire,” now he must ask: is this a mature sankalpa, or the hook of desire?

This is precisely where the civilizational significance of the ancient Indian tradition for modern psychology is revealed. It did not merely leave us ancient texts. It left us a way of seeing the human being as a whole.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 3

Choose one modern psychological concept: anxiety, self-esteem, motivation, trauma, addiction, procrastination, or emotional burnout. Try to describe it not in Western language, but through the map of Sattvavajaya. Indicate how manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, the gunas, raga, dvesha, smriti, and adhyasa may manifest in this state. Then write what is missing from the usual modern description of this condition if it does not take holistic Vedic anthropology into account.

Review Questions

- Why can ancient India be regarded as a civilization of knowledge about the human being?
- Why should the Vedas not be understood only as a religious corpus?
- What is shastra, and why is this form of knowledge important for Sattvavajaya?
- How does Ayurveda connect the body, mind, way of life, and therapy?
- Why does Sattvavajaya arise precisely within the Ayurvedic understanding of the human being?
- How do Samkhya, Yoga, and Vedanta help us understand Sattvavajaya?
- Why can Sanskrit terms not be fully replaced by modern psychological words?
- How does manas differ from the ordinary word “thinking”?
- Why is buddhi not simply intellect?
- How does the ancient Indian tradition help modern psychology restore wholeness?

Brief Summary

Ancient India is important for the history of Sattvavajaya because it created a holistic knowledge of the human being, in which body, mind, consciousness, ethics, medicine, way of life, and liberation were considered in mutual connection. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the darshanas, Yoga, Vedanta, and Ayurveda form the foundation without which Sattvavajaya cannot be correctly understood. This system is not a set of techniques and is not reducible to religious faith. It represents a mature civilizational form of knowledge about the inner human being, where Sanskrit terminology, therapeutic practice, and philosophical depth are joined into a single map for restoring the mind.

Chapter 4. Sattvavajaya within the System of Ayurveda

Key concepts: daiva-vyapashraya, yukti-vyapashraya, Sattvavajaya, prajnaparadha, psychosomatics.

To understand Sattvavajaya Chikitsa correctly, it must not be torn away from Ayurveda. If it is considered separately, it easily turns either into “ancient psychology,” or into a set of techniques for calming the mind, or into spiritual practice without a clinical and therapeutic context. But within the classical Ayurvedic system, Sattvavajaya has a clearly defined place: it is one of the main forms of treatment, directed toward the mind, consciousness, memory, discrimination, desires, fears, and the inner discipline of the human being.

Ayurveda is not medicine of the body alone. It views life as a unity of body, senses, mind, behavior, nutrition, environment, time, moral order, and consciousness. Therefore, illness in Ayurveda is not reduced to a local disturbance of an organ or tissue. It may arise on different levels: from improper nutrition, disruption of regimen, seasonal factors, suppression of natural needs, erroneous behavior, excess sensory impressions, improper use of reason, loss of measure, violation of dharma, and loss of inner clarity. That is why treatment in Ayurveda cannot be only external. It must touch the level on which the cause of the disorder has arisen.

Sattvavajaya belongs to that part of Ayurveda which works with the mind. But here it is necessary to clarify: “mind” in the Ayurvedic and Vedic understanding is not merely a stream of thoughts. It is an entire inner system that includes perception, attention, doubt, memory, desire, aversion, discrimination, self-identification, and the ability to hold the right direction. Therefore, Sattvavajaya treats not only a “bad mood” or “anxious thoughts,” but a disturbance in the inner governance of the human being.

The Ayurvedic tradition emphasizes that Sattvavajaya belongs to the threefold system of treatment together with yukti-vyapashraya and daiva-vyapashraya; at the same time, its specific feature lies in its direct influence on the work of the mind, especially in complex psychosomatic and mental conditions of mild and moderate severity. This means that Sattvavajaya must not be understood as a secondary section. It is one of the three great therapeutic supports.

4.1. The Brihat-trayi and the Laghu-trayi as the Classical Foundation of Ayurveda

When speaking about the place of Sattvavajaya in Ayurveda, it is important to remember the classical corpus of Ayurvedic literature. The foundation here is the Brihat-trayi — the great triad of the principal Ayurvedic texts: the Charaka Samhita, the Sushruta Samhita, and the Ashtanga Hridaya in the tradition of Vagbhata. For Sattvavajaya, this corpus is important not as a formal antiquity, but as a living foundation of clinical and anthropological thinking.

The Charaka Samhita is especially significant for internal medicine, the general theory of disease, medical ethics, and the understanding of the psyche, the mind, prajnaparadha, and Sattvavajaya. It is here that one can see especially clearly that health depends not only on the body, but also on the proper use of reason, memory, the senses, and way of life.

The Sushruta Samhita is important primarily as a great surgical and clinical text. But its significance is not limited to surgery. It forms a culture of precise medical observation, respect for anatomy, bodily integrity, marmas, and the professional responsibility of the physician.

The Ashtanga Hridaya is important as a systematized exposition of the eight branches of Ayurveda and as a practical educational text. For the student, it is valuable because of its clarity of presentation and its ability to connect general principles with everyday medical and preventive practice.

Alongside the Brihat-trayi, there is also the Laghu-trayi — the small triad of later Ayurvedic literature: the Madhava Nidana, the Sharangadhara Samhita, and the Bhavaprakasha. These texts are especially important for diagnostics, nidana, pharmacology, formulations, medicinal forms, and the expansion of the later clinical tradition.

For Sattvavajaya, the Brihat-trayi is important as a foundation, while the Laghu-trayi expands the practical clinical horizon. The first gives the basic map of the human being, illness, and therapy; the second helps us see how this map unfolds in later diagnostic and therapeutic practice.

4.2. Three Directions of Therapy in Ayurveda

In the classical Ayurvedic tradition, three main directions of therapeutic intervention are distinguished: daiva-vyapashraya, yukti-vyapashraya, and Sattvavajaya. These three directions do not compete with one another. They reflect different levels of human existence and different ways of restoring order.

Daiva-vyapashraya is connected with the level that is most difficult for the modern person to understand without prejudice. It includes sacred, ritual, mantric, karmic, and spiritual-symbolic means. In simple terms, daiva-vyapashraya works with those layers of life that cannot be reduced to direct rational causality. In ancient culture, the human being did not understand himself as an isolated biological unit, but as a being included in a cosmic, ancestral, moral, and divine order. A disturbance of this order could be experienced as a cause of suffering, while the restoration of connection with it could become part of treatment.

Yukti-vyapashraya is rational therapy. It is closest to what the modern person usually expects from medicine and naturopathy: nutrition, medicines, herbs, regimen, procedures, cleansing, restoration of Agni, correction of the doshas, work with tissues, lifestyle, and the bodily causes of disease. The word “yukti” points to the reasonable application of means. Here the physician analyzes the person’s condition and selects specific methods of influence.

Sattvavajaya is therapy of the mind. It is directed toward restoring the authority of sattva over the psyche, strengthening buddhi, restoring smriti, governing the indriyas, weakening raga and dvesha, correcting prajnaparadha, and removing adhyasa. If yukti-vyapashraya answers the question, “What must be done with the body, regimen, nutrition, and physiology?”, then Sattvavajaya answers the question, “What must be restored in the mind so that the person can once again see, choose, and act correctly?”

These three directions may be understood as three levels of help for one and the same person. If a person suffers from anxiety, yukti-vyapashraya may include sleep regimen, nutrition, herbs, oils, procedures, and work with Vata dosha. Daiva-vyapashraya may include mantra, prayer, ritual, turning toward a higher meaning, and restoring connection with the sacred order. Sattvavajaya will work with the way the mind generates anxiety: which object captures attention, which thoughts revolve around it, which raga or dvesha intensifies the condition, where buddhi has been lost, which samskaras support the reaction, and which smriti must be restored.

4.3. Why Sattvavajaya Does Not Replace All of Ayurveda

Sometimes a person, having first heard about the power of working with the mind, draws a hasty conclusion: if everything begins in consciousness, then one can treat only through consciousness, while the body, nutrition, regimen, and medicines are secondary. This conclusion is mistaken. Ayurveda does not think of the human being as an abstract consciousness accidentally placed in a body. As long as a person lives in an embodied state, the body, prana, senses, food, sleep, climate, age, season, and way of life matter. If a person is depleted, sleeps poorly, eats improperly, lives in chronic overstrain, and destroys Agni, his mind will suffer. Manas does not exist separately from the body.

Sattvavajaya does not abolish yukti-vyapashraya. On the contrary, it makes it stable. A person may receive proper nutrition, a good regimen, and competent procedures, but if he does not know how to govern desire, he will relapse. If he does not distinguish the beneficial from the harmful, he will not sustain the recommendations. If he lives in rajās, he will overload himself even during treatment. If he is immersed in tamās, he will avoid action and justify inertia. Therefore, Sattvavajaya helps a person become capable of treatment.

In the same way, Sattvavajaya does not abolish daiva-vyapashraya. For many people, illness, loss, crisis, and mental suffering are connected not only with physiology or cognitive error, but also with the loss of meaning, faith, connection with a higher order, and with the experience of guilt, destiny, karma, purpose, or spiritual emptiness. If the specialist completely ignores this level, he may fail to see a great deal. Sattvavajaya can work with the mind, but the mind often needs a higher orientation. Without it, the mind begins to serve random objects.

Therefore, it is more accurate to say this: Sattvavajaya does not replace Ayurveda, but reveals its inner psychological center. It shows that even the most rational treatment requires a clear mind, mature buddhi, stable smṛiti, and the ability to act. Without this, a person knows what is beneficial but chooses what is harmful. He hears recommendations but does not apply them. He begins recovery but abandons it. He understands the cause of suffering but again moves toward the same object.

4.4. What Exactly Sattvavajaya Treats

Sattvavajaya does not treat “the psyche in general.” Such an expression is too broad. Its object is a disturbance of inner governance, in which the mind ceases to be a transparent instrument of consciousness and becomes a source of distortions, attachments, and suffering.

The first object of its work is manas. Manas perceives, reacts, doubts, chooses between options, moves toward the pleasant and away from the unpleasant. When manas is under the influence of rajas, it becomes restless, excited, anxious, and greedy for impressions. When it is under the influence of tamas, it becomes heavy, confused, inert, and closed. Sattvavajaya helps manas return to greater clarity and governability.

The second object is buddhi. Buddhi discriminates what is beneficial and what is harmful, what is true and what is false, what must be done now and what is a trap. When buddhi weakens, a person may know what is right but fail to choose it. In Ayurveda, this condition is connected with prajnaparadha — an error of discriminating reason. Sattvavajaya strengthens buddhi through knowledge, reflection, instruction, self-observation, discipline, and repeated right choice.

The third object is smriti. Smriti is not merely memory of events. In the therapeutic sense, it is the ability to retain correct understanding at the moment of inner pressure. A person may clearly understand in the morning how he needs to live, and by evening, under the influence of desire, fear, or habit, forget everything. The loss of smriti is one of the causes of repeated suffering. Sattvavajaya restores to a person the memory of who he is, what is beneficial for him, what his path is, and what action is right now.

The fourth object is ahamkara. Ahamkara appropriates experience and says: “I,” “mine,” “with me,” “for me,” “against me.” Without ahamkara, ordinary personality functioning is impossible, but when it is distorted, a person begins to take temporary states as himself. “I am anxious,” “I am a failure,” “without this I am nobody,” “they do not love me, therefore I am worthless,” “my success is me,” “my body is my entire value.” Sattvavajaya does not destroy personality; it helps one see where ahamkara has appropriated what does not belong to it.

The fifth object is raga and dvesha. Raga pulls the mind toward an object, promising happiness. Dvesha pushes the mind away from an object, promising safety through avoidance. Both mechanisms make a person dependent on the external. Sattvavajaya teaches one to see the object as an object, not as a source of absolute fullness or absolute threat.

The sixth object is adhyasa. This is false superimposition, in which a person takes one thing for another. He takes an object for salvation, an emotion for truth, a role for himself, trauma for destiny, desire for love, fear for intuition, and apathy for humility. Sattvavajaya removes these superimpositions through viveka — discrimination.

4.5. Sattvavajaya and Psychosomatics

Ayurvedic thought does not separate body and mind as rigidly as modern European medicine often did. The state of the mind affects the body, and the state of the body affects the mind. A restless mind can intensify bodily disorders, while purity of mind and the strength of buddhi can strengthen health, will, and the human capacity to live correctly. Therefore, Sattvavajaya is especially important for understanding psychosomatic conditions.

Psychosomatics in this approach is not the simplified idea that “all diseases come from nerves.” Such an expression is crude and often unfair to a sick person. Illness may have many causes: heredity, infections, injuries, nutrition, toxins, age, climate, lifestyle, and social factors. But the psyche influences how a person enters illness, how he maintains it, how he responds to treatment, how he follows recommendations, and how capable he is of changing his life.

For example, a person with a chronic digestive disorder may receive correct dietary recommendations. But if his mind constantly seeks comfort in food, if raga for taste is stronger than buddhi, if stress destroys his regimen, if tamas leads to overeating and rajas to haste and insomnia, then treatment will remain incomplete. Here Sattvavajaya is needed: work with desire, habit, emotional self-soothing through food, loss of smriti, and the error of reason that again chooses what is harmful.

Another example is chronic anxiety. It may manifest bodily as tension, sleep disturbances, palpitations, spasms, fatigue, and digestive disorder. Yukti-vyapashraya may offer regimen, nutrition, oils, herbs, pranayama, and procedures. But if the mind continues to revolve around the future, if manas constantly creates scenarios of threat, if ahamkara links safety with control, and if buddhi cannot distinguish real danger from imagined danger, then anxiety will return. Here Sattvavajaya works with the very mechanism of the anxious mind.

Thus, in psychosomatics, Sattvavajaya is responsible for the inner contour of illness. It helps one see which mental processes support the bodily disorder and which changes of mind are necessary for treatment to become deeper.

4.6. Sattvavajaya as Therapy for Prajnaparadha

One of the key concepts linking Ayurveda and psychology is prajnaparadha. It can be translated as an error of reason, an offense against wisdom, a violation of discriminating knowledge, or, if one tries to find a modern expression, a cognitive distortion. But it is important to understand this not in a moralizing or accusatory way, but therapeutically. Prajnaparadha occurs when a person knows, or is capable of knowing, what is beneficial, but acts against this knowledge. He sees harm, but chooses it. He understands the consequences, but ignores them. He hears an inner warning, but suppresses it for the sake of desire, anger, fear, pride, or inertia.

In modern life, prajnaparadha appears constantly. A person knows that he needs sleep, but stays on his phone until late at night. He knows that certain food harms him, but eats it for comfort. He knows that a relationship is destructive, but returns to it out of attachment. He knows that he needs to act, but postpones. He knows that anger will destroy the conversation, but still speaks from anger. He knows that comparison on social media makes him unhappy, but continues to look. This is not simply a lack of information. It is a rupture in the connection between knowledge and action.

Sattvavajaya is the therapy of this connection. It asks: why did knowledge not become strength? Why did buddhi fail to hold the direction? What proved stronger than discrimination? Which raga, dvesha, vasana, or guna interfered? How can smriti be restored so that at the next moment of choice the person remembers not only intellectually, but with his whole state: this is beneficial, this is harmful, this is my action, this is my trap.

In this sense, Sattvavajaya is closer not to informational teaching, but to the education of reason. It does not merely tell a person what is right. It helps make what is right internally sustainable.

4.7. Why Work with the Mind Must Be Systemic

Many modern methods offer quick techniques: breathe, rewrite a thought, change a belief, do an exercise, shift attention. Such tools may be useful. But if they are applied without a holistic map, they produce only a temporary effect. Sattvavajaya does not reject techniques, but subordinates them to a system.

If the mind is anxious, one can give a breathing practice. But it is also necessary to understand what feeds the anxiety: rajas, fear of the future, attachment to control, an old samskara, disturbed sleep, excess digital impressions, weakened buddhi, loss of smriti, or real life uncertainty. If a person is dependent on an object, one can recommend limiting contact. But it is also necessary to understand what fullness he seeks in the object, what emptiness he is trying to cover, what ahamkara is connected with this object, and what fruit he has already appropriated in advance. If a person is in tamas, one can urge him toward activity, but it is necessary to understand whether this is inertia, exhaustion, hidden fear, absence of dharma, suppressed anger, or loss of meaning.

Systemicity means that the therapist does not treat only the external symptom. He sees the inner structure of the condition. This is the professional distinction of a Sattvavajaya specialist. He does not merely know the terms. He knows how to see how they operate in a living person.

4.8. Sattvavajaya and the Role of the Specialist

A specialist working in the logic of Sattvavajaya must be not only a bearer of information. He must also develop sattva, buddhi, smriti, and viveka in himself. This requirement may seem strict, but it is natural. One cannot help a person discriminate if the specialist himself is completely seized by his own ragas and dveshas. One cannot teach governance of the mind if one's own manas is chaotic. One cannot speak about smriti if the specialist himself forgets ethics, boundaries, and responsibility.

In Ayurveda, the figure of the physician was always connected not only with technique, but also with the quality of personality. In *The History of Medicine*, among the sections on ancient Indian medicine, the duties of the physician, assistants, teachers, and students are singled out separately; this shows that knowledge was understood as a professional and moral discipline, not merely as a set of methods. For Sattvavajaya, this is especially significant, because working with another person's mind requires purity of intention, precision of speech, patience, respect, and the ability not to intensify the client's dependence on the therapist.

The Sattvavajaya specialist must not become the object of a new attachment. His task is not to substitute himself for the person's buddhi, but to help strengthen buddhi. Not to create a cult of personality, but to return to the person the capacity to see. Not to impose a ready-made picture, but to lead toward discrimination. Not to suppress the client's emotions, but to help understand their origin. Not to destroy personality, but to return it to its proper place within the holistic system of the human being.

4.9. Sattvavajaya as the Foundation of Integrative Practice

For students of RIIN, it is especially important to understand that Sattvavajaya can become the center of the integrative practice of a naturopath, Ayurvedic consultant, and specialist in health restoration. In real work, a person rarely comes with one pure problem. He may complain at the same time of fatigue, excess weight, anxiety, insomnia, overeating, irritability, loss of meaning, bodily pain, relationship problems, and lack of discipline. If the specialist sees only nutrition, he will miss the mind. If he sees only emotions, he will miss the body. If he sees only the body, he will miss dharma. If he sees only spirituality, he may ignore regimen, sleep, and medical risks.

Sattvavajaya helps gather these levels. It asks: what inner order has been disturbed? What must be restored first? Sometimes a person needs to begin with the body: sleep, nutrition, cleansing, reduction of overload. Sometimes with the mind: reduce rajas, remove excess impressions, restore breathing and attention. Sometimes with buddhi: acknowledge an error of choice. Sometimes with smriti: restore memory of the aim. Sometimes with dharma: understand why he lives and acts at all.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya is not a separate “psychological addition” to naturopathy. It can become its inner governing principle. It helps the specialist not merely prescribe means, but understand why a person becomes ill, why he does not follow recommendations, why he returns to what is harmful, why he loses motivation, and why his mind resists healing.

4.10. Conclusion of the Chapter

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa occupies a special place in Ayurveda as therapy of the mind and of the human being's inner governance. It is connected with the two other directions of treatment — daiva-vyapashraya and yukti-vyapashraya — but has its own domain: the restoration of sattva, buddhi, smriti, viveka, the governance of the indriyas, and work with raga, dvesha, adhyasa, and prajnaparadha.

It does not replace bodily treatment, regimen, nutrition, procedures, or medical supervision, but it makes them more stable because it works with the level at which a person chooses, follows, relapses, forgets, justifies, desires, fears, and acts. This is why, without Sattvavajaya, any health restoration may remain external, while with it therapy gains access to the very center of human behavior.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 4

Choose one habit that a person usually cannot change despite understanding its harm: overeating, going to bed late, dependence on the phone, procrastination, outbursts of anger, returning to destructive relationships, or refusal of physical activity. Analyze it through the three directions of Ayurveda: what measures yukti-vyapashraya could offer; what semantic, ritual, or spiritual level daiva-vyapashraya could touch; and what Sattvavajaya must do at the level of manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, smriti, raga, and dvesha.

Review Questions

- What place does Sattvavajaya occupy in the system of Ayurveda?
- How does Sattvavajaya differ from yukti-vyapashraya?
- How does Sattvavajaya differ from daiva-vyapashraya?
- Why does Sattvavajaya not replace bodily treatment?
- What does therapy of the mind mean in the Ayurvedic sense?
- Which levels of the psyche are the object of Sattvavajaya work?
- Why is prajnaparadha a key concept for understanding illness?
- How does Sattvavajaya help a person sustain recommendations concerning regimen and nutrition?
- Why must a Sattvavajaya specialist work with his own mind?
- How can Sattvavajaya become the center of the integrative practice of a naturopath and Ayurvedic consultant?

Brief Summary

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa is Ayurvedic therapy of the mind, directed toward the restoration of sattva, discrimination, memory, inner discipline, and the correct relationship to objects. It acts together with the rational therapy of yukti-vyapashraya and the sacred-symbolic therapy of daiva-vyapashraya, but is responsible for a special level: the human capacity to see, choose, and act correctly. Its significance is especially great where illness or suffering is sustained by desire, fear, loss of smriti, error of buddhi, raga, dvesha, and false identification.

Chapter 5. Darshanas as the Philosophical Foundation of Sattvavajaya

Key concepts: darshanas, Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vedanta.

Sattvavajaya cannot be understood only as a section of Ayurveda unless its philosophical foundations are seen. In simple terms, this book teaches not only methods, but also a way of seeing the human being. The darshanas are needed precisely for this: they show how the Indian tradition distinguishes knowledge, error, consciousness, nature, action, and liberation.

For the beginner, this is especially important. Without a philosophical foundation, Sattvavajaya easily turns into a set of techniques: a little breathing, a little self-observation, a little control of the senses. With the darshanas, it becomes clear why all these methods work at all and what place they occupy in the overall system.

The Indian darshanas should not be understood as a set of competing opinions, where each school merely argues with the others. Of course, there are differences between them, sometimes very serious ones. But for Sattvavajaya, something else is more important: each darshana helps one see a particular aspect of the human being and the world. Nyaya helps one understand cognition, proof, and error. Vaisheshika teaches the distinction of the categories of reality. Samkhya gives a map of consciousness and nature. Yoga shows the method of disciplining the mind. Mimamsa reveals the meaning of action, duty, and proper performance. Vedanta raises the highest question of Brahman, Atman, adhyasa, and liberation. Together, they create the intellectual environment without which Sattvavajaya loses its depth.

5.1. Why a Psychologist Needs the Darshanas

To the modern student, philosophy may seem far removed from practice. He wants to know how to work with anxiety, anger, addiction, procrastination, psychosomatics, or loss of meaning. But without philosophy he will not understand what exactly he is treating. If a specialist does not know what the human being is, what the mind is, what consciousness is, what the norm is, what an error of cognition is, and what is considered healing, he will use methods blindly.

Every psychotherapy rests on a hidden philosophy. Even when a specialist says that he is “just working with the symptom,” behind this there still stands a certain understanding of the human being. If the human being is understood as a biological organism, therapy will be one thing. If as a system of behavior, another. If as a set of cognitive schemas, a third. If as a personality searching for meaning, a fourth. If as consciousness that has mistakenly identified itself with temporary states, a fifth. Therefore, philosophy is not an ornament of practice. It determines what the specialist sees before him.

Sattvavajaya proceeds from the fact that the human being is not reducible to the body, thoughts, emotions, social role, or biography. He is a multi-layered system in which the body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, and consciousness are arranged in a definite hierarchy. If this hierarchy is disturbed, suffering arises. If it is restored, the mind becomes clearer, and the person gains the possibility of living not from reaction, but from discrimination. Precisely such an understanding cannot be built without a philosophical foundation.

The darshanas give the student not abstract ideas, but a map. They answer the questions that lie beneath any therapeutic practice: how a person knows, why he errs, what causes suffering, what action is, what freedom is, how to distinguish the observer from the observed, how to calm the mind, and how to restore connection with truth. Therefore, the study of the darshanas is not a historical elective, but preparation of the specialist's thinking.

5.2. Nyaya: Logic, Cognition, and Error

Nyaya is the darshana of logic, proof, and correct cognition. For Sattvavajaya, it is important because suffering is often connected not only with emotion, but also with an error of cognition. A person sees a situation not as it is, but through the prism of fear, desire, past experience, expectations, resentment, or false identification. Therefore, therapy of the mind must include not only calming, but also the restoration of correct seeing.

In modern psychology, this partly corresponds to work with cognitive distortions. For example, a person makes a hasty generalization: “It did not work once, therefore it will never work for me.” Or he reads another person’s mind: “He is silent, therefore he despises me.” Or he catastrophizes: “If I make a mistake, everything will collapse.” But Nyaya gives a broader principle: one must understand how knowledge becomes reliable and how it becomes distorted.

For Sattvavajaya, this has direct significance. Buddhi must discriminate, but it may be obscured. Manas may bring impressions, but it does not always process them correctly. Ahamkara may appropriate an event and turn it into a threat to the “I.” Chitta may bring up old samskaras, and the person will perceive the present through the past. Therefore, a Sattvavajaya specialist must be able to ask: what has really been perceived? What has been added by the mind? What has ahamkara appropriated? Where is the fact, and where is the superimposition? Where is the rope, and where is the snake?

Nyaya teaches respect for discrimination. It helps one understand that not every experience is truth. A person truly experiences fear, but the object of fear may be misunderstood. He truly feels hurt, but his interpretation of the situation may be mistaken. He truly experiences desire, but the conclusion “without this I will not be happy” may be false. Therefore, in Sattvavajaya it is important not to deny the experience, but to investigate its cognitive basis.

5.3. Vaisheshika: Categories and the Distinction of Levels of Reality

Vaisheshika is known as a system of categories. It seeks to distinguish types of reality, properties, actions, universals, particulars, relations, and other categories. At first glance, this seems distant from psychotherapy. But for Sattvavajaya, the ability to distinguish categories is extremely important. Much inner suffering arises because a person confuses different levels: fact and evaluation, body and “I,” emotion and truth, desire and necessity, role and essence, temporary state and permanent nature.

For example, a person says: “I am destroyed.” But if we clarify, we may see that it is not his essence that has been destroyed, but an image of the future, an expectation, a role, a relationship, a social form, or a self-concept. If he does not distinguish these levels, then a temporary event is experienced as an ontological catastrophe. Vaisheshika teaches the very skill of categorical discrimination: what exactly is before us, to which level it belongs, what property it has, with what it is connected, and with what it should not be confused.

In therapy, this becomes a very practical skill. When a person says, “I am a failure,” the specialist must help distinguish: there is a specific action, there is its result, there is an evaluation of the result, there is a feeling, there is an old samskara, there is appropriation by ahamkara, and there is a general conclusion about oneself. Error arises when all this merges into one mass. Sattvavajaya restores distinctions, and therefore weakens adhyasa.

Categorical thinking is also important for diagnosing the gunas. Sattva, rajas, and tamas are not moral labels, but qualities of a state. If a person is active, this does not yet mean that he is sattvic; activity may be rajasic. If a person is calm, this does not yet mean that he is in sattva; it may be tamasic dullness. If a person speaks about spirituality, this does not yet mean that he acts from viveka; sometimes it may be a form of escape from responsibility. Without precise categories, the specialist easily makes mistakes.

5.4. Samkhya: Purusha, Prakriti, and the Map of the Manifested Human Being

Samkhya has special significance for Sattvavajaya because it gives one of the main maps for distinguishing consciousness and nature. In its simplest form, Samkhya distinguishes Purusha and Prakriti. Purusha is the conscious witness, the principle of awareness. Prakriti is nature, the field of manifestation, including the gunas, mind, senses, body, and the entire changing world of experience. For psychology, this distinction is fundamental: a person must learn to see that he is aware of states, but is not reducible to them.

If an emotion is observed, then there is one who observes it. If a thought comes and goes, then a person is not identical with the thought. If the body changes, becomes ill, and ages, but the experience “I am” preserves its continuity, then the body does not exhaust the human being. This does not mean contempt for the body or the world. It means the restoration of the correct hierarchy. Prakriti is not denied; it simply ceases to be mistakenly taken for the highest “I.”

Samkhya also gives Sattvavajaya the language of the gunas. Sattva, rajas, and tamas are the three qualities of Prakriti through which the psyche manifests. Sattva gives clarity, lightness, harmony, and the capacity to see. Rajas gives movement, striving, excitation, and restlessness. Tamas gives heaviness, inertia, obscuration, resistance, and immobility. When tamas predominates, a person tends toward apathy and fear; when rajas increases, toward anxiety and restlessness; and the strengthening of sattva gives the mind purity and balance.

For therapy, this is invaluable. Instead of describing a person only with words such as “anxious,” “lazy,” “aggressive,” “dependent,” or “distracted,” Sattvavajaya looks at the quality of psychic energy. Anxiety is often connected with rajas. Apathy with tamas. Clear compassion with sattva. Impulsive passion with rajas. Dull denial of a problem with tamas. Calm determination with sattva supported by proper rajas. This makes diagnosis more subtle.

Samkhya also helps us understand why work with the mind cannot be reduced to moralizing. If a person is in tamas, it is useless simply to demand high clarity from him. First one must reduce inertia, restore movement, sleep, nutrition, prana, light, and simple actions. If a person is in rajas, it is useless to demand deep peace from him immediately; movement must be ordered, excess stimuli removed, and energy directed. If sattva is weak, conditions must be created for its growth. In this way, philosophy becomes practical diagnosis.

5.5. Yoga: Discipline of the Mind and the Cessation of Fluctuations

If Samkhya gives the map, Yoga gives the method. In the classical definition, Yoga is connected with the cessation of the fluctuations of chitta. For Sattvavajaya, this is one of the central principles. The mind suffers not only because it has content, but because it loses transparency. Its vrittis — waves, movements, forms, reactions — become so strong that the person ceases to see reality and himself clearly.

Yoga teaches that the mind can be disciplined. But discipline here does not mean crude suppression. It is a matter of the gradual restoration of order: ethics, way of life, body, breath, senses, attention, meditation, and stable contemplation. Therefore, the eightfold path of Yoga is important for Sattvavajaya not as a separate religious practice, but as a methodological map for stabilizing the mind.

Pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi are especially important. Pratyahara is the withdrawal of the senses from objects, or more precisely, the restoration of the freedom of the senses from their automatic subordination to external stimuli. In the modern world, pratyahara becomes especially relevant. The phone, advertising, social media, news, music, food, and visual images constantly pull the indriyas outward. Manas continuously receives impressions, chitta records traces, rajas intensifies, and smriti weakens. Without pratyahara, a person does not possess his own attention.

Dharana is the holding of attention. Dhyana is more continuous contemplation. Samadhi is deep collectedness, in which the mind ceases to distort the object. In the therapeutic context, these states may be understood gradually: first, a person learns not to be completely scattered; then to hold attention; then to observe a state without immediately merging with it; then to return more and more deeply to clarity. Sattvavajaya uses this principle in working with emotions, desires, and fears.

Yoga also shows that without practice, knowledge remains weak. A person may understand that he should not follow a destructive desire, but at the moment of contact with the object, manas will run there again. Therefore, attention, breath, senses, memory, and discrimination must be trained. Sattvavajaya is not only conversation. It is the education of the inner instrument.

5.6. Mimamsa: Action, Dharma, and the Power of Proper Performance

Mimamsa is often perceived as the school of ritual action and the interpretation of Vedic injunctions. For Sattvavajaya, it is important above all as a reminder: knowledge must be connected with action. A person may have good ideas, deep experiences, and beautiful intentions, but if they do not pass into right action, inner order is not restored.

In psychology, this is especially important. Many people suffer not from a lack of information, but from a rupture between knowledge and action. They know that they need to go to sleep earlier, but they do not. They know that they need to stop toxic communication, but they continue. They know that they need to move, study, heal, ask for help, and follow a regimen, but they postpone. Sattvavajaya considers this rupture through *prajnaparadha*, *raga*, *dvesha*, *vasanas*, *tamas*, and the weakening of *smriti*. But Mimamsa reminds us: right action has its own independent power.

In this context, *dharma* is not simply a moral commandment. It is the proper order of action corresponding to a person's nature, situation, duty, aim, and higher meaning. If a person acts against *dharma*, his psyche loses support. If he acts according to *dharma*, even difficult action can strengthen him. Therefore, Sattvavajaya must help not only to analyze the mind, but also to return the person to action.

Here it is important to distinguish desire from *sankalpa*. Desire may be scattered, emotional, and dependent on an object. *Sankalpa* is an intention that has passed through *buddhi* and is connected with action. Mimamsa helps us understand that an inner state is tested by performance. If a person says that he wants to recover but does not follow a regimen, his desire has not yet become *sankalpa*. If he says that he seeks truth but is not ready to change his behavior, knowledge has not become *dharma*.

5.7. Vedanta: Atman, Brahman, and the Removal of Adhyasa

Vedanta gives Sattvavajaya its highest foundation. If Samkhya helps distinguish consciousness and nature, and Yoga gives the method of disciplining the mind, Vedanta reveals the main root of suffering: a person takes himself to be what he is not in the absolute sense. He identifies with the body, mind, emotion, role, history, success, trauma, desire, or fear. This is adhyasa — the false superimposition of the non-Atman upon Atman.

For Sattvavajaya, this idea has direct therapeutic significance. As long as a person seeks final fullness in a temporary object, he inevitably falls into dependence. Relationships, money, the body, recognition, social role, spiritual status, or the fruit of action may be important on their own level, but none of these objects can become the absolute foundation of the “I.” When an object receives such significance, raga, dvesha, fear of loss, envy, tension, and loss of smriti arise.

Vedanta introduces the distinction between Atman and anatman, the true Self and that which is not the true Self. This distinction must not be understood as contempt for life. To say “I am not the body” does not mean not caring for the body. To say “I am not the emotion” does not mean suppressing the emotion. To say “I am not the role” does not mean abandoning one’s duties. It means returning each level to its proper place: the body is to be treated, emotions are to be understood, a role is to be fulfilled, but none of them is to be taken as the final essence of the human being.

Here it is important to distinguish the vyavaharika and paramarthika levels. On the vyavaharika level there exist the body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, the individual subject, action, suffering, and therapy. It is precisely here that the Sattvavajaya specialist works. Paramarthika points to the ultimate non-dual reality, where the subject-object structure itself is dissolved. Therefore, Sattvavajaya as therapy acts within relative experience, but is directed toward apavada — the removal of false identifications.

This logic may be expressed through the educational formula $X = 0 + A$, where 0 indicates pure consciousness as the foundation, A indicates the layers of adhyasa, and X indicates the conditioned “I.” The formula does not describe a literal change in Brahman or consciousness. It is needed only as a pedagogical model: pure consciousness does not become bound in itself; bondage arises at the level of mistaken identification.

Vedanta helps us understand why Sattvavajaya is not reduced to the improvement of personality. Modern therapy often seeks to strengthen self-esteem, adaptation, and emotional regulation. All of this may be useful, but Sattvavajaya goes deeper: it asks who exactly needs recognition, who is afraid, who desires, who suffers from a role, and who observes all these states. Its aim is not merely a more successful ahamkara, but the restoration of the proper relationship between personality, mind, action, and the deep foundation of consciousness.

Thus, Vedanta becomes not abstract metaphysics, but a therapeutic framework. It teaches one to see where the temporary has been taken for the absolute, where the object has become a false center, where ahamkara has appropriated what does not belong to it, and where superimposition must be removed. In this sense, apavada is not the destruction of the world, but the return of reality to its proper place: the rope remains a rope, and the imagined snake disappears.

5.8. How the Darshanas Are United in Sattvavajaya

Now it becomes possible to see that Sattvavajaya does not borrow ideas from the darshanas randomly. It unites them functionally.

From Nyaya, it receives respect for correct cognition and the analysis of error. This is needed in order to distinguish fact from superimposition, experience from truth, and inference from reality.

From Vaisheshika, it receives the skill of distinguishing categories. This helps prevent the mixing of body and Self, emotion and essence, desire and necessity, role and nature.

From Samkhya, it receives the map of Purusha, Prakriti, and the gunas. This gives the foundation for diagnosing states and for distinguishing the witness from the manifested field.

From Yoga, it receives the method of disciplining the mind, working with vrittis, senses, attention, breath, and concentration.

From Mimamsa, it receives respect for action, dharma, duty, and precise performance.

From Vedanta, it receives the highest framework: Atman, Brahman, adhyasa, apavada, viveka, and liberation.

Ayurveda connects all this with therapy for the living human being. Therefore, Sattvavajaya may be called not a separate technique, but the therapeutic application of Vedic philosophical anthropology to the suffering of the mind.

5.9. Practical Significance for the Student

The student does not need to become a professional historian of Indian philosophy in order to apply Sattvavajaya. But he must understand where its concepts come from. Without Nyaya, he will confuse experience with truth. Without Vaisheshika, he will mix levels. Without Samkhya, he will not understand the gunas or the distinction between consciousness and nature. Without Yoga, he will lack a method for disciplining the mind. Without Mimamsa, he will lose the connection between knowledge and action. Without Vedanta, he will reduce Sattvavajaya to personality improvement, forgetting the removal of adhyasa.

In practical work, this may be presented as follows. Anxiety comes to a person. Nyaya helps ask: is the perception of threat reliable? Vaisheshika helps distinguish what is fact, what is thought, what is bodily reaction, and what is prediction. Samkhya helps see rajas in the mind and the connection between manas and the object. Yoga offers a method for stabilizing attention and breath. Mimamsa returns the person to right action: what must be done now? Vedanta helps him not identify completely with anxiety and see it as a state, not as the essence of the “I.” Ayurveda adds regimen, nutrition, sleep, bodily restoration, and correction of the doshas. Sattvavajaya unites all this into a therapeutic map.

This is why the darshanas are not theory for the sake of theory. They teach the specialist to see more deeply.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 5

Choose one situation from life: anxiety before an important event, resentment, strong desire, procrastination, conflict, envy, or fear of failure. Analyze it through the six darshanas. From the point of view of Nyaya, determine where there may have been an error of cognition. From the point of view of Vaisheshika, separate the fact, evaluation, emotion, bodily reaction, and conclusion about oneself. From the point of view of Samkhya, determine the predominant guna. From the point of view of Yoga, suggest a way to stabilize the mind. From the point of view of Mimamsa, formulate the right action. From the point of view of Vedanta, determine with what false identification occurred.

Review Questions

- What does the word “darshana” mean?
- Why can Sattvavajaya not be understood without a philosophical foundation?
- How does Nyaya help in therapy of the mind?
- How does Vaisheshika help distinguish the levels of psychic experience?
- What is the significance of Samkhya for understanding Purusha, Prakriti, and the gunas?
- Why is Yoga the methodological foundation of disciplining the mind?
- How is Mimamsa connected with action and dharma?
- Why is Vedanta the highest ontological framework of Sattvavajaya?
- How does adhyasa differ from an ordinary error of thinking?
- How are the darshanas united in the practical work of a Sattvavajaya specialist?

Brief Summary

The darshanas are the philosophical foundation of Sattvavajaya Chikitsa. Nyaya teaches correct cognition and analysis of error; Vaisheshika teaches the distinction of categories; Samkhya teaches the distinction between consciousness and nature, as well as the understanding of the gunas; Yoga teaches discipline of the mind; Mimamsa teaches right action and dharma; Vedanta teaches the distinction between Atman and anatman, the removal of adhyasa, and the return to the true nature of consciousness. In Sattvavajaya, these directions do not exist as abstract philosophy, but become the foundation of diagnosis, therapy, and the inner restoration of the human being.

Chapter 6. From Soul to Behavior: How Western Psychology Lost the Whole

Key concepts: psyche, reductionism, behaviorism, psychoanalysis, cognitive psychology.

To understand the significance of Sattvavajaya for the modern student, it is useful to see the path of Western psychology without polemics and without worship. Modern psychology has provided much knowledge about the parts of the human being, but it often leaves the question of the whole open. Against this background, Sattvavajaya becomes especially understandable: it offers not yet another technique, but a general map of the human being.

Therefore, comparison with Western psychology is needed in this book not for the sake of argument, but for sober discrimination. The student must be able to see that each school illuminates something well, but not every school holds body, attention, memory, desire, ethics, dharma, and consciousness within one system.

Western psychology did not lose the whole at once. At first, it was part of the philosophy of the soul; then it began to strive for scientific precision and increasingly oriented itself toward what could be measured from the outside. This brought great benefit, but it also had a price: it became more and more difficult to speak about the soul, consciousness, and the subject as the center of inner life. As a result, psychology increasingly dealt with behavior, reactions, schemas, and brain processes, while leaving open the question of the human being as a whole.

6.1. From Psyche to Psychology without the Soul

The very word “psychology” is connected with the Greek concept of psyche, traditionally translated as soul. In its original sense, psychology was meant to be knowledge of the inner life of the human being: of that which feels, thinks, suffers, seeks meaning, and experiences itself. But as modern science developed, the object of psychology gradually changed. The soul proved too difficult to measure, and so attention began to shift toward what could be observed, recorded, and verified: sensations, reactions, behavior, functions, cognitive processes, and neural correlates.

There was progress in this. Psychology became more precise; it learned to study perception, memory, attention, learning, behavior, development, emotions, and the influence of the nervous system. But along with precision came a danger: the measurable began to replace the essential. What is easier to register began to seem more real. Behavior is easier to observe than consciousness, and so behavior became central. Neural activity is easier to record than meaning, and so the brain began to be perceived as a more scientific object than experience. Test answers are easier to process than a person’s inner struggle, and so the test sometimes began to seem a more reliable path to understanding than attentive conversation and observation of life.

Thus a psychology arose that knows much about the manifestations of the psyche, but does not always dare to speak about its foundation. It describes emotions, but does not always answer who experiences them. It studies thinking, but does not always ask who observes thought. It speaks of personality, but often mixes it with a set of traits, roles, and behavioral patterns. It studies consciousness, but often tries to derive it from processes that themselves become known only because they are already given in consciousness.

For Sattvavajaya, this is fundamental. The human being is not reducible to behavior, cognitive schemas, biography, the body, or brain processes. All of these are important, but they are only parts of a broader system. The inner subject of experience cannot be completely bracketed out, because it is precisely this subject who suffers, desires, fears, errs, identifies, and seeks liberation.

Therefore, the distinction between the Western and Indian maps should not be turned into an argument about “who is right.” Western psychology has given great precision in the study of separate processes. The Indian tradition has preserved another optics: the human being is understood as a multi-level continuum of body, prana, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, and consciousness. Here, what is central is not only the connection between psyche and body, but also the discrimination between conditioned experience and the deeper foundation of consciousness.

Sattvavajaya begins precisely with this discrimination. It asks not only what a person does and what thoughts arise in him, but also who perceives, who desires, who suffers, who appropriates experience, and who is able to see this appropriation. Without such a question, psychology remains useful in particulars, but incomplete in its understanding of the human being as a whole.

6.2. The Cartesian Turn: “I Think” and “I Am”

One of the most important turns in Western thought was the Cartesian principle: “I think, therefore I am.” In the history of philosophy, this formula had enormous significance. Descartes was searching for an indubitable foundation of knowledge and found it in the act of thinking. If I doubt, then I think; if I think, then I exist. For European science this became a powerful step: the subject received its foundation in thinking, and the world became an object of rational investigation.

But for Sattvavajaya there is a subtle problem here. If human existence is grounded in thinking, then thinking becomes the central measure of the “I.” A person then begins to understand himself primarily as a thinking being. The Vedic tradition offers a different order: I exist, therefore thinking is possible. If one were to say it in the style of Descartes: “I am, therefore I think.” Being and consciousness are primary, while thought is one of the states arising in the field of consciousness. Thought comes and goes, while the fact of awareness remains. Even when there are few thoughts, as

in deep peace or in the interval between thoughts, presence does not disappear. Even when a person says, “I had no thoughts,” someone later knows this absence.

For psychology, this distinction is fundamental. If I am identical with thinking, then changing thoughts becomes the main path to changing the person. This is partly true on the practical level: thoughts do influence emotions and behavior. But if I am deeper than thinking, then therapy cannot be limited to replacing one thought with another. It must help the person distinguish thought from the one who is aware of it, a state from the one who observes it, a role from the one who temporarily acts through that role. It is precisely here that Sattvavajaya proves deeper than ordinary cognitive correction. It does not only correct the content of thought; it weakens false identification with thought.

The Cartesian turn also led to another consequence: subject and object were opposed to one another. The external world became the object of investigation, while the inner subject gradually became something suspicious: it interferes with pure objectivity, introducing distortion, subjectivity, and personal attitude. For physics, bracketing the subject may have been methodologically useful. But for psychology it became dangerous. Psychology cannot fully exclude the subject, because its very object is the inner experience of the subject.

6.3. Objectivity without the Subject as a Methodological Trap

Modern science owes much to the ideal of objectivity. Thanks to it, humanity learned to verify facts, distinguish observation from fantasy, build reproducible experiments, and avoid arbitrariness and personal dogmas. But in psychology, objectivity has a special complexity. If we study a stone, we can try to exclude the subjectivity of the observer as much as possible. But if we study anxiety, desire, pain, meaning, shame, love, inner conflict, self-deception, freedom, or the loss of oneself, then the subject cannot be completely excluded. These phenomena exist as lived experiences.

Psychology, striving to be “like physics,” sometimes begins to study the human being as if inner experience were only a side effect. Then anxiety becomes a set of symptoms, depression becomes a scale, personality becomes a profile of traits, memory becomes a function, and consciousness becomes information processing. All of this can be useful for a particular task. But if one forgets that behind the symptom there is a living subject, science loses depth. The human being becomes an object, but ceases to be understood as one who experiences himself.

This is the methodological trap: psychology wants to study the inner, but it often uses methods created primarily for the external. It wants to understand the subject, but often describes him as an object. It wants to heal suffering, but sometimes sees only behavior, neurotransmitters, thought schemas, or adaptation to the environment. Sattvavajaya does not reject objective methods, but it affirms that psychology must include the subject, not exclude him.

In this respect, the Vedic tradition proceeds from the opposite pole. It begins not with the object, but with awareness. The world, the body, thoughts, emotions, and roles are given to the human being in experience. Therefore, one must investigate not only what is given, but also the one to whom it is given. Without this, investigation remains incomplete.

6.4. Behaviorism: The Human Being as Behavior

Behaviorism became one of the most radical expressions of the desire to make psychology objective. It proposed studying not consciousness, not the soul, not inner experience, but behavior: that which can be observed from the outside, recorded, measured, and connected with stimulus and response. This had its own strength. Behaviorism helped psychology become more rigorous, experimental, and practical. It showed how habits, reactions, reinforcements, avoidance, and learning are formed.

But from the point of view of Sattvavajaya, behaviorism sees only the external contour of the human being. It can describe what a person does, under what conditions a reaction is strengthened, and how behavior is reinforced, but it has difficulty answering who experiences the action, what meaning the object has for ahamkara, what raga or dvesha stands behind repetition, what is happening with buddhi, where smriti has been lost, and what samskara is active in chitta. Behavior is important, but it does not exhaust the psyche.

For example, a person constantly checks his phone. Behaviorally, one can describe the stimulus, reaction, and reinforcement: a notification triggers checking, new information gives brief pleasure, and the behavior is reinforced. This is true. But Sattvavajaya asks more deeply: why does the mind give its attention to the object so easily? What rajas supports the constant search for impressions? What emptiness or anxiety makes manas reach outward? What does ahamkara seek in messages — confirmation of significance, control, connection, power, safety? How does this weaken smriti? How does it affect buddhi? How can the indriyas be returned from slavery to the object?

Here the difference becomes visible. Behaviorism can help change a behavioral pattern, but Sattvavajaya seeks to understand the inner mechanism of dependence on the object. Therefore, it does not deny behavior, but includes it within a broader map.

6.5. Psychoanalysis: The Return of Depth, but without Final Wholeness

Psychoanalysis arose as a reaction against a superficial understanding of the human being. It showed that a person is not transparent to himself, that behind conscious actions there may stand unconscious desires, conflicts, repressed experiences, childhood relationships, and defense mechanisms. This was an important turn toward depth. Psychoanalysis reminded psychology that the human being is not reducible to observable behavior and that past experience may secretly govern the present.

Sattvavajaya can recognize the value of this discovery. In its own language there are chitta, samskaras, vasanas, hidden tendencies, recurring vrittis, kleshas, raga, and dvesha. It too knows that a person often acts not from clear choice, but from deep traces. The difference is that psychoanalysis usually remains within the history of the personality, whereas Sattvavajaya places personal history within a broader ontology of consciousness. For Sattvavajaya, the root of suffering lies not only in repressed conflict, but in avidya and adhyasa — mistaken identification with what is not the true Self.

Psychoanalysis helps a person understand why he repeats certain relationships, desires, or defenses. Sattvavajaya goes further and asks: who has identified with this story? Why does a person take his trauma to be himself? Why has an old samskara become the center of identity? How can buddhi and smriti be restored so that the past no longer fully governs the present? How can the object, desire, fear, and role be seen as observable, rather than as the essence of the Self?

Therefore, psychoanalysis may be considered an important partial optics. It sees depth, but does not always give the higher discrimination between Atman and anatman. It reveals inner conflicts, but does not always lead a person toward sattva, viveka, and apavada. Sattvavajaya can use its observations, but it does not need psychoanalysis as its foundation, because its own tradition already contains a teaching about hidden traces, tendencies, and false identification.

6.6. Cognitive Psychology and CBT: The Power of Working with Thought and Its Limit

Cognitive psychology and cognitive behavioral therapy have made a major contribution to practical psychology. They showed that between an event and an emotional reaction there stands interpretation. A person suffers not only from the fact itself, but also from the thought about the fact. If he perceives a mistake as a catastrophe, criticism as annihilation, uncertainty as threat, and rejection as proof of his own worthlessness, his emotions will correspond to that interpretation. Working with such thoughts can indeed help.

Sattvavajaya easily recognizes this level. Buddhi must discriminate correctly. Manas may create vikalpas — alternatives, doubts, constructions. Ahamkara may appropriate conclusions. Chitta may throw up old traces, because of which a new situation is seen through past pain. Therefore, the correction of false understanding is necessary. In this sense, CBT is close to one of the practical levels of Sattvavajaya.

But again, the difference goes deeper. CBT often works with the content of thought: how rational it is, what evidence supports or contradicts it, and what thought would be more adaptive. Sattvavajaya works not only with the content of thought, but also with the very identification with thought. It asks: who observes this thought? Why has the thought gained power over the “I”? What raga or dvesha makes the mind return to it again and again? Which guna strengthens it? What adhyasa makes it appear to be truth? How can smriti be restored so that the person remembers himself not only at the level of reasoning, but also at the moment of pressure?

For example, a person thinks: “If I am not approved of, I am worth nothing.” CBT may help challenge this thought: does everyone really have to approve of me? Is there evidence that my value is equal to another person’s opinion? What alternative thoughts are possible? Sattvavajaya will add: here ahamkara has tied the sense of “I” to the object of approval; adhyasa has arisen, in which the external gaze has become the measure of inner value; raga reaches toward praise, dvesha fears criticism; buddhi must see that approval is an object, not Atman; smriti must restore memory of a deeper support. This does not contradict cognitive work, but deepens it.

6.7. Humanistic and Existential Psychology: The Return of Meaning

Humanistic psychology returned personality, dignity, growth, authenticity, and the capacity for choice to the center. Existential psychology raised the questions of meaning, freedom, death, loneliness, responsibility, and anxiety before finitude. These directions became an important reaction against excessive mechanistic thinking. They reminded psychology that the human being is not only behavior, not only unconscious conflict, not only a schema of thinking, but a living being seeking meaning and authenticity.

Sattvavajaya can enter into deep dialogue with these directions. It too holds that a person suffers when he loses connection with the authentic center, when he lives not from dharma, when he replaces meaning with objects of desire, and when he fails to distinguish the temporary from the essential. But in Sattvavajaya, authenticity is not limited to the psychological self-realization of the personality. It is connected with a deeper question: who is the human being beyond roles, desires, fears, and biographical stories?

Existential psychology often stops at the courage to be oneself in the face of death, freedom, and uncertainty. Sattvavajaya recognizes these questions, but adds: fear of death is connected with identification with the body and temporary personality; loss of meaning is connected with the loss of dharma and smriti; freedom is impossible without liberation from raga and dvesha; authenticity cannot be complete while ahamkara takes itself to be the center. Therefore, the Vedic system does not merely search for meaning within life, but places life within the broader horizon of dharma and moksha.

Humanistic psychology helps one respect personality. Sattvavajaya helps personality not become an idol. Existential psychology helps a person meet finitude. Sattvavajaya helps one see that consciousness is not exhausted by finite forms of experience. Therefore, these directions may serve as bridges, but they do not replace the Vedic map.

6.8. Neuropsychology and Cognitive Sciences: The Brain as Instrument, Not Final Explanation

Modern neurosciences have provided an enormous amount of material on the connection between the brain and the psyche. We know that brain injuries change behavior, memory, speech, emotions, and attention. We know that hormones, neurotransmitters, sleep, inflammation, nutrition, stress, and bodily condition influence psychological experience. For an integrative specialist this is very important. Sattvavajaya must not turn into a denial of biology. The body and the brain matter.

But there is a difference between recognizing the importance of the brain and reducing consciousness to the brain. To say that the brain is an instrument for the manifestation of psychic functions is one thing. To say that consciousness is fully produced by the brain and has no other ontological depth is already a philosophical position, not simply a scientific fact. In the axiomatic materials of Sattvavajaya, it is emphasized that modern psychology encounters the “hard problem of consciousness”: how subjective experiences arise from physically describable processes. In Sattvavajaya, consciousness is not derived from something else, but is accepted as a primary axiom; therefore, what is studied is not the origin of consciousness, but its modifications and false identifications.

Sattvavajaya can respect neuroscience as the study of the instruments and correlates of inner life. But it is not obliged to accept the materialist reduction of consciousness. If the brain changes during meditation, this is important. But this does not prove that consciousness is only the brain. If anxiety has neurophysiological correlates, this is important. But it does not cancel the work with raga, dvesha, smriti, buddhi, and adhyasa. If trauma is recorded in the bodily-nervous system, this is important. But it does not exhaust the question of who has identified with the traumatic trace and how inner freedom can be restored.

Thus, neuroscience may be an ally of Sattvavajaya at the level of yukti-vyapashraya, diagnostics, and the understanding of the body and brain. But it must not become the sole foundation of psychology.

A further bridge with contemporary science may be found in the understanding of perception itself. Modern cognitive approaches increasingly show that the senses and the brain do not simply give the human being reality as it is in itself. They form a picture of the world that is useful for orientation, survival, choice, avoidance of danger, and interaction with objects. In this sense, the perceived world may be understood as a working interface of experience. It is real as experience and as a field of action, but it does not have to be the final structure of being.

This is important for Sattvavajaya. The Vedic tradition has long distinguished the ultimate foundation of reality from the practical level of experience. What a person sees, hears, feels, and thinks is not dismissed as a meaningless illusion, but it is also not accepted as the Absolute. The world of perception is functional: one must live in it, care for the body, build relationships, fulfill dharma, study, heal, and act. But suffering begins when this functional level is taken as the final truth, and the observed is taken to be the observer.

Thus, the modern language of interface may serve as a bridge to understanding maya and adhyasa. Maya, in this context, is not a crude “non-existence of the world,” but the measured, formed, and functional surface of experience. Adhyasa is the error by which this surface is taken as ultimate reality and as the true Self.

6.9. The Main Error of Fragmentation

The main problem of modern psychology is not that it has many schools. Diversity in itself is not bad. The problem is that these schools often lack a common foundation. One speaks the language of behavior, another of the unconscious, a third of cognitive schemas, a fourth of meaning, a fifth of the body, a sixth of the brain, a seventh of social construction. Each creates its own map, but the human being remains one. In real life, a person does not have separately “cognitive” anxiety, separately “bodily” anxiety, separately “existential” anxiety, separately “biochemical” anxiety, and separately “karmic” anxiety. In life, everything is intertwined.

Sattvavajaya is useful precisely because it offers a hierarchical map. It does not deny the levels, but orders them. The body is important, but it is not the highest Self. The indriyas are important, but they must not govern the person. Manas is important, but it must be under the guidance of buddhi. Buddhi is important, but it must be purified by viveka and oriented toward dharma. Ahamkara is necessary for life, but it must not appropriate the absolute center. Chitta stores traces, but the person must not be a slave of samskaras. Smriti must restore correct knowledge. Sattva must guide the mind toward clarity. And consciousness remains the foundation of experience.

Fragmentation arises when one level is declared the main one and an attempt is made to explain everything else through it. Sattvavajaya avoids this because from the very beginning it thinks of the human being as multi-layered.

6.10. Why Sattvavajaya Does Not Reject Western Psychology, but Puts It in Its Proper Place

It is important not to cultivate hostility toward Western psychology. The student should study modern schools, know their strengths, and be able to use their observations. Psychoanalysis helps one see hidden dynamics. Behaviorism helps one understand behavior and reinforcement. CBT helps one work with erroneous thoughts. Humanistic psychology reminds us of the dignity of personality. Existential psychology reminds us of meaning and finitude. Body-oriented approaches remind us of the connection between body and psyche. Neurosciences remind us of the brain and physiology. All of this is valuable.

But Sattvavajaya puts these approaches in their proper places. It does not dissolve into them and does not need them as its foundation. It possesses its own ontology of consciousness, its own anthropology, its own theory of suffering, its own language of diagnosis, and its own therapeutic method. Modern schools may be used for comparison, but not as equal fragments of an eclectic system; they illuminate separate aspects of what is already included in Sattvavajaya within a broader anthropological and therapeutic context.

This is the key rule for the entire textbook. We are not building a mixture. We are studying a holistic system and learning to conduct dialogue with other systems.

6.11. Conclusion of the Chapter

Western psychology has traveled a complex path: from the philosophy of the soul to experimental science, from the study of consciousness to behavior, from the inner subject to measurable processes, from the whole human being to a multitude of specialized schools. This path has produced much valuable knowledge, but it has also led to a crisis of wholeness. Psychology has become strong in particulars, but often weak in the question of the integral nature of the human being.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa proposes returning psychology to its lost center. It does not deny behavior, thinking, the unconscious, the body, the brain, personality, or the social environment, but places all of this within a broader map of consciousness, mind, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, gunas, smriti, dharma, and adhyasa. This is why it can be presented not as a supplement to modern psychology, but as a holistic system with which modern psychology can enter into fruitful dialogue.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 6

Choose one psychological problem: anxiety, dependence on approval, overeating, procrastination, jealousy, anger, burnout, or fear of failure. Describe how one Western school might view it: behaviorism, psychoanalysis, CBT, humanistic psychology, existential psychology, or a neuropsychological model. Then describe the same problem through Sattvavajaya: manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, gunas, raga, dvesha, smriti, and adhyasa. At the end, draw a conclusion: what does the Western approach see well, and what becomes visible only within a more holistic map?

Review Questions

- Why is the word “psychology” historically connected with the concept of the soul?
- What happens when psychology replaces the study of the soul with the study only of behavior or functions?
- What is the Cartesian turn in the understanding of the human being?
- Why is the formula “I am, therefore I think” more important for Sattvavajaya than “I think, therefore I am”?
- How does behaviorism help psychology, and what are its limitations?
- What valuable discovery did psychoanalysis make, and why does it not exhaust Sattvavajaya?
- In what way is Sattvavajaya’s work with thought deeper than ordinary cognitive correction?
- How do humanistic and existential psychology approach the theme of wholeness?
- Why is neuroscience important, but unable to fully replace the philosophy of consciousness?
- Why does Sattvavajaya not reject Western schools, but also not dissolve into them?

Brief Summary

Western psychology, striving to become a rigorous science, gradually shifted attention from the soul and consciousness to measurable manifestations: behavior, reactions, cognitive schemas, unconscious mechanisms, brain processes, and social factors. This produced significant practical and scientific results, but led to the fragmentation of the image of the human being. Sattvavajaya Chikitsa restores to psychology a holistic map, where behavior, thinking, emotions, body, memory, ego, and brain are considered not in isolation, but in connection with consciousness, buddhi, smriti, the gunas, dharma, and the mechanisms of false identification.

Chapter 7. The Human Being as a Multi-Level System

Key concepts: sharira, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, Atman.

After the historical and philosophical block, the book turns to the central question: who is the human being in Sattvavajaya? For the beginner, this is a turning point. From this point onward, the textbook ceases to be a discussion of tradition and becomes a working map, without which it is impossible to understand suffering or analyze cases.

Sattvavajaya proceeds from a simple principle: the human being is not reducible to the body, emotions, thinking, or biography. He is a multi-level system in which body, senses, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, and the deep foundation of consciousness are connected, but not identical. For the student, this is the main anthropological key of the entire book.

In Sattvavajaya, the human being is described as a spiritual-phenomenal system, not as a biomachine: on the empirical level, he includes the body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and Atman; the model of pancha-kosha — the five sheaths of the human being, from the physical body to the sheath of bliss — is also used. This is a very important point. Sattvavajaya does not deny the body and the psyche, but it does not reduce the human being to them. It shows that suffering may arise on different levels and be transmitted between them: the bodily affects the mind, the mind affects the body, memory affects perception, weakened buddhi leads to error, and the loss of smriti deprives a person of inner support.

Modern scholars of Indian philosophy often describe the anthropology characteristic of India as a multi-level model of the human being. In it, one can distinguish the somatic level, the pranic or biological level, the mental level with the indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and antahkarana, as well as the highest supra-individual principle — Atman, Purusha, or Brahman, depending on the school. Pancha-kosha is one of the classical versions of such multi-level anthropology: it shows how the human being is thought of not as a single plane, but as a system of nested levels of experience and awareness.

7.1. Why Holistic Anthropology Is Needed

Anthropology is the teaching about the human being. In ordinary psychology this term is not always used, but in fact every therapy has its own anthropology. If a specialist considers the human being primarily as an organism, he will look for biochemical and physiological causes. If he sees him as a set of behavioral reactions, he will change behavior. If he sees him as the bearer of traumatic memory, he will work with trauma. If he sees him as a social subject, he will look at family, culture, environment, and relationships. All of this may be correct, but it is not complete.

Holistic anthropology is needed because a person never suffers with only “one layer.” For example, anxiety may manifest in thoughts, but at the same time it changes breathing, sleep, digestion, muscle tone, relationships, behavior, and the sense of “I.” A person may say, “I am anxious,” and then a temporary state becomes part of identity. He may have an old samskara that is activated in similar situations. His buddhi may understand that there is no real danger, yet manas still creates images of threat. In such a situation, the simple explanation “these are anxious thoughts” will be useful, but insufficient.

Holistic anthropology allows the specialist to ask more precise questions. At what level did the disturbance arise? Is it the body? Prana? Manas? Buddhi? Ahamkara? Chitta? The gunas? Loss of smriti? Adhyasa? Raga? Dvesha? Error of action? Violation of dharma? And most importantly: which level must be restored first so that the others can begin to come into order?

Sattvavajaya does not treat the human being as a set of symptoms. It sees him as a system of interconnected levels. This is its strength.

7.2. The Body: Sharira as the Field of Experience

The first obvious level of the human being is the body, sharira. Without the body, a person does not act in the world of forms. Through the body he walks, speaks, works, touches, eats, sleeps, becomes ill, ages, recovers, expresses emotions, and receives experience. The body is not the entire essence of the human being, but it is the most important field of the manifestation of his life.

In spiritual and psychological texts, there is sometimes a temptation to speak of the body as something secondary or even obstructive. For Sattvavajaya, such an approach is incomplete. As long as a person is embodied, the body is his instrument, home, and field of practice. If the body is depleted, the mind becomes unstable. If sleep is destroyed, buddhi weakens. If food is heavy and tamasic, manas becomes clouded. If the body is constantly in tension, anxiety receives physiological support. Therefore, work with the mind must not despise the body.

But the body must not become the absolute center of identity. When a person says, “I am my body,” adhyasa arises. The body becomes not a field of experience, but the entire measure of the “I.” Then aging, illness, changes in appearance, fatigue, sexual attractiveness, strength, or weakness begin to determine a person’s inner value. This gives rise to fear, shame, envy, comparison, dependence on approval, and a constant struggle against natural changes.

The correct attitude toward the body in Sattvavajaya is twofold: the body must be cared for, but one must not identify with the body completely. It requires nutrition, regimen, movement, cleansing, sleep, treatment, and respect. But it is not the highest Self. This discrimination protects both from neglect of the body and from bodily obsession.

7.3. The Indriyas: The Gates of Perception

The next level is the indriyas, the organs of perception and action. Through the indriyas, the human being comes into contact with the world. Sight meets form, hearing meets sound, smell meets odor, taste meets flavor, touch meets contact. The organs of action make it possible to speak, grasp, move, eliminate, and enter into sexual and reproductive interaction. A person's entire everyday life passes through these gates.

The indriyas themselves are not the problem. The problem begins when the mind becomes a slave to the objects of the senses. An external object contacts an indriya, manas fixes the impression, ahamkara appropriates it, chitta records the trace, and raga or dvesha intensifies. A single visual impression may awaken desire. A single sound may raise irritation. A single smell may return a memory. A single taste may trigger the habit of overeating. A single touch may awaken strong attachment or fear.

Therefore, in Sattvavajaya, work with the indriyas has great significance. If a person constantly overloads the sense organs, his mind will not be stable. The modern environment is built upon the capture of the indriyas: bright screens, endless feeds, short videos, loud music, sweet and spicy food, sexualized images, news, advertisements, messages. All of this continuously pulls manas outward. As a result, a person loses the ability to remain within himself. His attention no longer belongs to him, but to objects.

Pratyahara — the withdrawal of the senses from objects — in this sense is not an escape from the world. It is the restoration of freedom. A person is not obliged to look at everything that is shown to him. He is not obliged to listen to everything that sounds. He is not obliged to taste everything that is offered. He is not obliged to react to every signal. When the indriyas return under the guidance of buddhi, the mind becomes calmer.

7.4. Manas: The Mind as the Center of Impressions and Fluctuations

Manas is one of the central terms of Sattvavajaya. It cannot be fully translated by the word “thinking.” Manas perceives, gathers impressions, doubts, compares, fluctuates, reacts, and creates alternatives. It is connected with the indriyas and is constantly turned toward objects. If the indriyas are the gates, then manas is the one who receives streams of impressions and begins to work with them.

Manas is very mobile. It can quickly move from one object to another, from desire to fear, from memory to fantasy, from hope to irritation. In rajas, manas becomes restless, excited, overloaded. It wants novelty, seeks stimuli, becomes anxious, builds scenarios, and cannot stop. In tamas, manas becomes clouded, heavy, avoids clarity, and moves into sleepiness, denial, and apathy. In sattva, manas becomes transparent, receptive, stable, and capable of listening to buddhi.

Sattvavajaya works with manas not through violence, but through ordering. The mind cannot simply be commanded to be calm. If it is overloaded with impressions, lacks sleep, feeds on heavy objects, lives in a rajasic environment, and is constantly excited by desires and fears, it will not become sattvic merely from a beautiful idea. It needs conditions: regimen, breath, limitation of stimuli, a clear aim, correct knowledge, repetition, practice, and the support of buddhi.

It is important for the student to begin observing his own manas. What objects does it seek? How quickly does it switch? What does it fear? What does it repeat? Which thoughts return most often? Where does it run away from action into fantasy? Where does it replace life with inner conversation? Such observation is the first step toward therapy.

7.5. Buddhi: Discriminating Reason

Buddhi is discriminating reason. It sees, evaluates, determines direction, distinguishes the beneficial from the harmful, the true from the false, the temporary from the essential. If manas brings alternatives and impressions, buddhi must decide what to follow. Without buddhi, a person becomes governed by objects, emotions, habits, and external pressure.

In Sattvavajaya, buddhi has central therapeutic significance. It is buddhi that must see: this desire leads to destruction; this resentment is built on false appropriation; this fear is exaggerated; this habit strengthens tamas; this object is not the source of fullness; this action corresponds to dharma; this action only feeds ahamkara. If buddhi is weak, a person may be educated, but not wise. He may know much, but choose what is harmful. He may understand the consequences, but again follow raga.

Thus prajnaparadha arises — the error of discriminating reason. This is one of the most important concepts in all Ayurvedic psychology. A person sees what is beneficial but does not follow it; knows what is harmful but chooses it; understands the direction but does not act. In modern language, one could say that the connection between knowledge, value, decision, and behavior is disturbed. But in Sattvavajaya this is explained more deeply: buddhi is obscured by the gunas, raga, dvesha, samskaras, ahamkara, and loss of smriti.

Strengthening buddhi is one of the main tasks of the textbook and of practice. This is done through correct knowledge, reflection, observation of consequences, instruction, ethics, discipline, the daily choice of what is beneficial, and the refusal of self-deception. Buddhi cannot be strengthened by reading alone. It is strengthened through action, when a person again and again chooses what leads to clarity.

7.6. Ahamkara: The Sense of “I” and the Mechanism of Appropriation

Ahamkara is the principle of “I-making,” the sense of a separate “I,” the mechanism of appropriating experience. Thanks to ahamkara, a person can say: “I do,” “I think,” “I want,” “this is mine,” “this happened to me.” On the practical level, ahamkara is necessary. Without it, ordinary personality functioning would be impossible: a person could not protect the body, fulfill duties, distinguish his own actions from those of others, build a biography, or participate in social life.

But ahamkara becomes a source of suffering when it appropriates what should not become the absolute “I.” It says: “I am the body,” “I am my thoughts,” “I am my profession,” “I am my trauma,” “I am my success,” “I am my defeat,” “I am other people’s opinion of me,” “I am my role,” “I am my status,” “I am my desire.” At that moment, the temporary becomes the center of identity, and the person falls into dependence.

For example, criticism may simply be information about an action. But ahamkara appropriates it: “They are criticizing not the action, but me.” Then manas becomes agitated, rajas raises defense or attack, tamas may lead to shutting down, chitta activates old hurts, and buddhi loses clarity. The person reacts not to the fact, but to a threat to the image of “I.”

Sattvavajaya does not set the task of destroying ahamkara in the everyday sense. An ordinary person needs a healthy personal function. But ahamkara must take its proper place. It must be an instrument of life, not the king of the inner world. It must serve dharma, buddhi, and consciousness, rather than appropriate the entire field of experience.

7.7. Chitta: The Field of Memory, Samskaras, and Vasanas

Chitta is the deep field of memory and impressions. In modern language, it may be partly compared with memory, unconscious traces, emotional patterns, and inner tendencies, but none of these words fully exhausts the concept. Chitta stores samskaras — impressions left by experience — and vasanas — tendencies, inclinations, and inner attractions that rise again and again in behavior.

A person often thinks that he is reacting to the present. But very often he reacts to the present through the past. A person hears an intonation similar to the voice of a strict parent, and an old defense rises within him. He sees another person's success and feels childhood inferiority. He receives a refusal and experiences not only the current situation, but the entire accumulated history of rejection. He meets an object of desire and feels not merely interest, but the force of an old vasana.

Sattvavajaya works with chitta through awareness, smriti, viveka, repeated right choice, purification of impressions, a sattvic way of life, and practice. Chitta cannot simply be ordered to forget. But one can stop feeding old samskaras, reduce contacts that activate them, strengthen buddhi, create new sattvic traces, and restore memory of what is correct.

Chitta makes the human being complex. He is not a blank slate. There are already traces, habits, inclinations, attachments, fears, images, and desires within him. Therefore, therapy must be patient. If a vasana has been forming for years, it will not always disappear after one conversation. But if a person understands the mechanism, he stops taking every wave that rises within him as his true nature.

7.8. Atman and the Question of the Deep Foundation

Vedic anthropology does not stop at the body, senses, mind, reason, ego, and memory. It asks the main question: what is the foundation of all experience? Who knows the body? Who sees thoughts? Who notices emotions? Who remembers? Who says “I”? What remains when states change?

In the tradition, this deep principle is designated by the word Atman. Atman is not the ordinary personality, the social “I,” or a psychological self-image. It is not identical with ahamkara. Ahamkara says, “I am like this,” “I do,” “mine,” “for me.” Atman is the deep foundation of awareness, without which there would be neither the body as experienced, nor thought as noticed, nor emotion as conscious, nor memory as accessible.

In Sattvavajaya, Atman is described as the highest, unchanging Self, pure consciousness, not bound to the body or the mind, while the human being on the empirical level is understood as a unity of several levels: body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, and Atman. For therapy this has enormous significance. If a person fully identifies himself with changing levels, he inevitably suffers. If the body changes — “I am destroyed.” If an emotion arises — “I am this emotion.” If a thought appears — “this is my truth.” If a role is lost — “I no longer exist.” If a relationship collapses — “I am nothing.” Sattvavajaya restores discrimination: all these states are real as experience, but they are not the final essence of the human being.

This discrimination must not turn into a cold denial of life. To say “I am not the body” does not mean not treating the body. To say “I am not the emotion” does not mean suppressing the emotion. To say “I am not the role” does not mean abandoning duties. It means returning each level to its proper place.

7.9. Pancha-kosha: The Five Sheaths of the Human Being

The model of pancha-kosha, or the five sheaths, helps us understand the human being even more holistically. It describes not separate organs of the psyche, but layers through which human life manifests. Usually, annamaya-kosha, pranamaya-kosha, manomaya-kosha, vijnanamaya-kosha, and anandamaya-kosha are distinguished.

Annamaya-kosha is the physical, “food” sheath. It is the body built from food and sustained by food. It is connected with tissues, organs, weight, strength, illness, nutrition, sleep, and the material condition.

Pranamaya-kosha is the energetic sheath, connected with prana, breath, life force, movement, tone, circulation, and vitality. When prana is disturbed, a person may feel fatigue, distraction, anxious excitation, and inner instability.

Manomaya-kosha is the mental-emotional sheath, the level of manas, impressions, reactions, emotions, images, and inner dialogue.

Vijnanamaya-kosha is the sheath of discriminating knowledge, connected with buddhi, understanding, values, direction, the capacity to see meaning, and the ability to make choices.

Anandamaya-kosha is the sheath of deep bliss, the subtlest layer, pointing to closeness to the inner foundation, peace, and fullness that does not depend on gross objects.

The practical value of this model is enormous. One and the same problem may manifest on one level while being sustained by another. For example, a person complains of anxiety. On the annamaya level, he may have sleep deprivation, excess stimulants, and weak nutrition. On the pranamaya level, shallow breathing and inner excitation. On the manomaya level, a stream of anxious thoughts. On the vijnanamaya level, the absence of a clear decision and weakened buddhi. On the anandamaya level, a loss of connection with a deep sense of meaning and trust in being. If one works only with thoughts, the result will be partial.

Pancha-kosha teaches the student not to rush. One must ask: at which level is the main disorder now? Sometimes a person first needs to restore sleep and nutrition. Sometimes breath and prana. Sometimes manas must be calmed. Sometimes buddhi must be strengthened. Sometimes meaning must be restored. Holistic therapy does not always begin from the highest level; it begins from the level at which the person is truly available for change.

7.10. The Gunas as the Quality of the Whole System

Sattva, rajas, and tamas pass through all levels of the human being. They color the body, mind, speech, desire, memory, behavior, nutrition, sleep, relationships, learning, and spiritual practice. Therefore, the gunas are not merely a philosophical theory of nature. They are a practical language of diagnosis.

The body may be tamasic: heaviness, stagnation, inertia, sleepiness. It may be rajasic: tension, restlessness, hyperactivity, overheating. It may be more sattvic: lightness, stability, purity, sufficient energy without fuss.

Manas may be tamasic: clouded, lazy, closed. Rajasic: anxious, jumping, irritated. Sattvic: clear, receptive, calm.

Buddhi in tamas may fail to see the obvious. Buddhi in rajas uses reason to justify desire, argument, and pride. Buddhi in sattva discriminates honestly, calmly, and precisely.

Ahamkara may be tamasic: clinging to a gross identity, resentments, and fears. Rajasic: competing, proving, controlling. Sattvic: performing its function without excessive appropriation.

Chitta may be polluted by tamasic and rajasic traces, or it may gradually be purified through sattvic impressions, practice, knowledge, and right action.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya does not simply “increase sattva” in a general sense. It helps sattva become the leading quality of the entire inner system.

7.11. Disturbance of Hierarchy as a Cause of Suffering

Now one of the main principles of the chapter can be formulated: suffering often arises not because some level of the human being is bad in itself, but because the hierarchy of levels is disturbed.

The indriyas must perceive, but they must not govern the person. Manas must process impressions, but it must not be king. Buddhi must discriminate, but if it serves ahamkara, it turns into an instrument of self-justification. Ahamkara must help the personality act, but it must not appropriate the absolute center. Chitta must store experience, but it must not dictate the present through old samskaras. The body must be cared for, but it must not become the sole foundation of identity.

When a lower level seizes a higher one, disorder arises. A sense object seizes the mind. The mind seizes reason. Ego seizes knowledge. Memory seizes the present. The object seizes consciousness. Then a person says, “I cannot do otherwise,” although in reality his system has temporarily lost proper guidance.

Sattvavajaya restores the hierarchy. It returns the indriyas under the guidance of manas, manas under the guidance of buddhi, buddhi under the guidance of viveka and dharma, ahamkara to the position of an instrument, chitta into the process of purification, and the whole system to the memory of the deep foundation of consciousness.

7.12. Practical Significance for Diagnosis

For the Sattvavajaya specialist, the multi-level model of the human being is a diagnostic map. When a person comes with a complaint, the specialist must not immediately attach a label. He must examine the levels.

If a person says, “I have no strength,” one must ask: is the body depleted, is prana disturbed, is manas overloaded, does buddhi fail to see the aim, has tamas risen, has dharma been lost, or is ahamkara resisting action?

If a person says, “I am anxious,” one must ask: is this a real danger, rajas, scattered manas, weak smriti, an old samskara, attachment to control, fear of ahamkara, or the absence of clear action?

If a person says, “I cannot let go,” one must ask: which object has become the center, what raga holds him, what has ahamkara appropriated, which vasana is active, what fruit is imagined as the condition of happiness?

If a person says, “I understand everything, but I do not act,” one must examine prajnaparadha, weakness of buddhi, tamas, fear, attachment to the fruit, absence of sankalpa, and loss of smriti.

Such diagnosis makes Sattvavajaya deep and practical. It does not replace medical, psychological, or psychiatric diagnosis where they are necessary, but it gives its own map of the inner process.

7.13. Conclusion of the Chapter

In Sattvavajaya Chikitsa, the human being is understood as a multi-level system. He has a body, sense organs, mind, discriminating reason, ego, memory, life force, gunas, sheaths, and a deep foundation of consciousness. Each level is important, but no changing level should be taken as the whole Self. Suffering often arises from a disturbance of the inner hierarchy, when the indriyas, manas, ahamkara, samskaras, or objects gain power over buddhi and smriti. Healing begins with the restoration of proper order.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya does not work only with thoughts, only with emotions, only with behavior, or only with the body. It works with the human being as a whole. This is what makes it not a technique, but a complete psychological and therapeutic system.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 7

Choose one of your own recurring states: anxiety, irritation, apathy, envy, desire, fatigue, procrastination, or dependence on approval. Analyze it by levels: body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, gunas, smriti. Answer in writing: at which level does the state begin, which level strengthens it, where does false identification occur, and what action could restore the hierarchy?

Review Questions

- Why does Sattvavajaya view the human being as a multi-level system?
- What role does the body play in Vedic anthropology?
- Why can the indriyas become gates both of knowledge and of dependence?
- How does manas differ from thinking in the narrow sense?
- Why is buddhi the central therapeutic function?
- How does ahamkara help a person live, and how does it also create suffering?
- What are chitta, samskaras, and vasanas?
- Why must Atman not be identified with ahamkara?
- How does the pancha-kosha model help diagnosis?
- What does the restoration of inner hierarchy mean?

Brief Summary

In Sattvavajaya, the human being is understood as a unity of several levels: body, indriyas, manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, prana, gunas, koshas, and deep consciousness. Each level has its own function, but suffering arises when the levels become mixed and the lower ones begin to govern the higher ones. Sattvavajaya restores the correct order: the senses stop dragging the mind, manas becomes governable, buddhi is strengthened, ahamkara stops appropriating what does not belong to it, chitta is purified, smriti returns, and the person gradually stops losing himself in the changing objects of experience.

Chapter 8. The Body and the Indriyas: The Gates of Experience

Key concepts: sharira, indriyas, vishaya, sparsha, pratyahara.

The book now examines the first practical entrance into inner life: the body and the indriyas. For the student, this is an important shift: the mind is rarely seized “by itself.” More often, the chain begins with contact with an object through sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell, a message, an image, or a bodily sensation.

Therefore, the body and the indriyas are not secondary in Sattvavajaya. They are the first gates of experience. If the student understands how the object enters through the indriyas and how manas, ahamkara, chitta, and buddhi are then activated, it will become much easier to understand anxiety, addiction, irritation, and digital overload.

8.1. The Body as the Meeting Place of the Inner and the Outer

The body is not merely a biological shell. In the therapeutic sense, the body is the meeting place of the inner and the outer. Through the body a person enters the world; through the body he receives impressions; through the body he expresses emotions; through the body he acts, becomes ill, recovers, ages, feels fatigue, pleasure, tension, hunger, satiety, pain, warmth, cold, excitation, and relaxation. Everything a person calls “my life,” at the level of everyday experience, passes through the body.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya cannot be a psychology that ignores the body. If a person sleeps poorly, his buddhi weakens. If he overeats heavy food, manas becomes clouded. If he lives in constant bodily tension, rajas supports anxiety. If he is depleted, even correct thoughts cannot always be held. If the body is in tamas, a person may mistake his physiological inertia for “loss of meaning” or a “spiritual crisis.” Sometimes therapy of the mind begins with the simplest bodily things: sleep, nutrition, breath, movement, light, water, and reduction of overload.

But the body must not become the absolute center of the “I.” Here the first important adhyasa begins: a person takes the body to be his entire self. Then appearance, age, illness, sexual attractiveness, strength, weakness, weight, skin, hair, face, and figure become not merely characteristics of the body, but the foundation of self-worth. The person no longer says, “my body has changed”; he feels, “I have become worse.” He does not say, “the body has become ill,” but experiences it as, “I am destroyed.” He does not say, “the body has limitations,” but thinks, “my life has lost its value.” At that moment, the body ceases to be an instrument of experience and becomes a false center of personality.

Sattvavajaya offers a more precise attitude: the body must be respected, treated, cleansed, strengthened, nourished, and protected, but it should not be taken as the final essence of the human being. This discrimination is especially important for students of naturopathy and Ayurveda. A specialist working with the body must not become a materialist, but neither should he neglect the body for the sake of a beautiful spiritual idea. The body is a field of practice, not a prison and not an idol.

8.2. The Indriyas as Channels of Perception

The indriyas are the organs through which the human being is connected with the world. In classical Indian thought, organs of knowledge and organs of action are usually distinguished. The organs of knowledge make perception possible: sight perceives form and color, hearing perceives sound, smell perceives odor, taste perceives flavor, touch perceives contact. The organs of action allow activity to be expressed: speaking, grasping, moving, eliminating, and entering into sexual and reproductive interaction.

In the psychology of Sattvavajaya, the organs of perception are especially important because it is precisely through them that the object enters the mind. As long as a person has not seen, heard, sensed, tasted, touched, or recalled an object through a bodily trace, manas may remain relatively calm. But contact with the object sets movement in motion. The object in itself may be neutral, but in connection with past experience, samskaras, gunas, and the state of ahamkara, it acquires force.

For example, one person sees sweet food and calmly passes by. Another sees the same object, and desire immediately rises within him. For the first person, it is simply food. For the second, it is comfort, reward, a way to cope with fatigue, a childhood memory, compensation for loneliness, or a symbol of forbidden pleasure. The object is the same, but the inner field is different. This means that the indriyas do not work in isolation. They transmit the impression into manas, and then the whole system is activated.

The same happens with sound. One and the same intonation may be neutral for one person and a trigger for another, because chitta raises an old trace of criticism or humiliation. A smell may evoke a memory. Touch may awaken trust or fear. The sight of a face may raise attachment. A message on the phone may evoke anxiety, joy, expectation, jealousy, or dependence.

Therefore, the indriyas are not merely biological organs. In Sattvavajaya, they are doors through which the world enters the psyche. If the doors are constantly open to chaotic, exciting, and polluting objects, the mind cannot remain clear.

8.3. Vishaya: The Object of the Senses as the Beginning of the Chain

The object of the senses is called vishaya. This is not necessarily a gross external object. Vishaya may be an image, sound, taste, bodily sensation, smell, face, word, message, memory, fantasy, screen image, idea of success, image of a desired person, idea of money, status, or a future result. Everything on which the mind lingers as an object of perception or imagination can become vishaya.

The problem is not that objects exist. Life is impossible without objects. A person must see, hear, eat, speak, work, communicate, love, study, and act. The problem begins when the object ceases to be an object and becomes an inner master. The mind returns to it again and again. Manas turns it over, ahamkara appropriates it, chitta strengthens the trace, buddhi begins to justify desire, and smriti is lost. The object gains power.

In the Bhagavad Gita, this pattern is described as a chain: contemplation of the objects of the senses gives rise to attachment; from attachment desire is born; from desire, when obstructed, anger arises; then delusion, loss of memory, destruction of buddhi, and the fall of the person follow. For Sattvavajaya, this is not merely a religious instruction, but a law of the psyche. An object on which the mind lingers without discrimination gradually begins to restructure the person's inner state.

A modern example is simple. A person looks several times at someone else's success on social media. At first, it is just a picture. Then manas lingers: "How did he manage that?" Then ahamkara activates comparison: "And I am worse." Then raga arises toward the same image of success, and dvesha toward one's current position. Chitta raises old traces of inferiority. Buddhi loses clarity and stops seeing the nearest right action. Smriti disappears: the person forgets his own path and begins to live by someone else's picture. It all began with the contact of the indriyas with an object.

8.4. Sparsha: Contact as a Psychic Event

Sparsha means contact. In the ordinary sense, contact is simply the meeting of a sense organ with an object. But in the psychology of Sattvavajaya, sparsha is the beginning of a psychic event. As long as an object has not entered the field of attention, it does not govern the mind. But once contact has occurred, what matters next is the state of the entire inner system.

One and the same contact can lead to different results. If manas is calm, buddhi is clear, smriti is stable, and sattva is sufficiently strong, the object is perceived simply as an object. A person sees a beautiful thing and can appreciate it without slavery. He hears praise and receives it without intoxication. He hears criticism and examines it without collapse. He sees a desired person and does not lose reason. He receives money and uses it as a means. He encounters difficulty and acts.

But if manas is excited, buddhi is weak, ahamkara is hungry, chitta is full of old traces, and rajas or tamas is strong, contact becomes the beginning of capture. A beautiful object turns into a necessity. Criticism becomes personal annihilation. Praise becomes a narcotic. Money becomes a measure of value. Relationships become a source of salvation. The body becomes the only basis of the “I.” Thus adhyasa appears.

Therefore, in Sattvavajaya, what matters is not only what a person contacts, but also who within him meets this contact. One and the same world becomes a different world for a sattvic, rajasic, and tamasic mind.

8.5. Psychohygiene of the Indriyas

If the indriyas are the gates of experience, then psychohygiene begins with the question: what does a person feed his sense organs every day? What does he look at? What does he listen to? What conversations does he have? What smells, tastes, touches, images, and digital impressions enter his mind? What trace does all this leave in chitta?

Modern culture almost does not teach people to protect the indriyas. On the contrary, it is built on their constant exploitation. The screen must be brighter. The video must be shorter and stronger. Food must be tastier and more intense. Advertising must be more exciting. Music must be more intrusive. News must be more alarming. Social media must be endless. Sexual images must be accessible. All of this holds manas in constant movement toward objects. A person thinks that he is simply resting, but his indriyas continue to work, chitta records traces, rajas intensifies, and sattva becomes thinner.

Psychohygiene of the indriyas does not mean that the student must go into a cave and stop seeing the world. It means conscious selection of impressions. Just as a person chooses food for the body, he must choose food for the mind. One cannot feed the mind aggression, envy, lust, anxiety, informational garbage, vulgarity, and chaos, and then expect sattvic clarity. The mind becomes similar to what it regularly perceives.

This is especially important for the future specialist. If he overloads his indriyas every day, constantly remains in digital noise, watches exciting content, engages in crude conversations, and feeds on chaotic impressions, his manas will be unstable. And an unstable manas cannot deeply listen to another person. It will hurry, evaluate, project, become irritated, or grow tired.

8.6. The Digital Environment as a New Test of the Indriyas

Ancient texts speak about the objects of the senses, but in our time the object of the senses has acquired a new form: the digital. The phone has become a portable collection of vishaya. It contains form, sound, speech, image, faces, money, status, sexuality, news, praise, criticism, comparison, fear, play, learning, entertainment, work, communication, and endless opportunity for distraction. Therefore, the smartphone is not merely a device, but a powerful field for testing the indriyas.

A person may pick up the phone “for one minute” and lose an hour. Why? Because the indriyas have entered into contact with an object, manas has begun to follow a chain of stimuli, rajas has intensified, buddhi has temporarily yielded, and smriti of the original aim has disappeared. He wanted to check one message, and twenty minutes later finds himself in someone else’s news, advertisement, argument, or comparison. This is a classic example of loss of governance over the indriyas.

From the point of view of Sattvavajaya, digital dependence is not only a problem of habit. It is a disturbance of pratyahara, weakening of buddhi, scattering of manas, intensification of rajas, accumulation of samskaras, and constant feeding of raga and dvesha. A person becomes accustomed to reacting to an external signal faster than to an inner aim. Attention no longer belongs to him.

Therefore, modern Sattvavajaya must include digital pratyahara: periods without the phone, conscious disabling of notifications, refusal of exciting feeds before sleep, limiting visual garbage, choosing educational and sattvic content, and returning attention to the body, breath, reading, live conversation, nature, and action.

8.7. Pratyahara as the Return of the Senses under the Guidance of Buddhi

Pratyahara is often translated as the withdrawal of the senses from objects. But this expression can be misunderstood. Pratyahara does not mean hatred of the world, suppression of the senses, or refusal of perception. It is not a struggle against the eyes, ears, taste, or body. It is the return of the indriyas under the guidance of buddhi.

When the indriyas are ungoverned, they drag manas toward every object. He sees — he wants. He hears — he becomes irritated. He smells — he remembers and reaches. He receives a message — he abandons the task. He encounters a beautiful image — he loses collectedness. This is a state of external dependence. A person thinks he is free, but in reality his attention is constantly being purchased by objects.

Pratyahara begins with the simple ability not to follow every stimulus. To see and not grasp. To hear and not react automatically. To feel desire and not become it. To notice irritation and not give it speech. To receive an impulse and make a pause. In this pause, buddhi appears. Without the pause, manas and the indriyas govern the person.

Practically, pratyahara can be very simple. Not eating immediately as soon as taste arises. Not opening the phone immediately as soon as a signal comes. Not answering immediately from anger. Not looking where raga pulls. Not listening to what is known in advance to pollute the mind. Not entering a conversation that will strengthen tamas or rajas. Not feeding an old samskara with a new impression. This is not asceticism for the sake of pride. It is the protection of inner clarity.

8.8. The Body as a Mirror of the State of the Mind

The body not only receives impressions, but also reflects the state of the mind. Anxiety appears in the breath, shoulders, abdomen, heartbeat, and muscle tone. Anger appears in heat, tension, voice, gaze, and contraction. Tamas appears in heaviness, sleepiness, slowing down, and a collapsed posture. Rajas appears in fussiness, quick movements, impatience, and a restless gaze. Sattva appears in evenness, clarity, softness, and collectedness.

A student of Sattvavajaya must learn to read the body not as a separate machine, but as the visible layer of the psyche. Of course, crude conclusions should not be made from posture or breathing alone. But the body often shows what a person has not yet become aware of. He says, “I am calm,” but his breathing is shallow. He says, “I do not care,” but his jaw is clenched. He says, “I am just tired,” but tamas and suppressed action are visible in the body. He says, “I want this,” but the body is tense with fear.

Work with the body can help the mind. Even breathing reduces the excitation of manas. Muscle relaxation weakens the signal of threat. Oil procedures, warm food, regimen, and sleep can reduce Vata-like restlessness. Movement can bring a person out of tamas. But Sattvavajaya must not stop at the body. If, after bodily relief, the person returns to the same objects, the same thoughts, the same ragas and dveshas, the state will be disturbed again. Therefore, the body is an entry point, but not the whole therapy.

8.9. Sexuality as a Powerful Field of the Indriyas

Sexuality is one of the most powerful fields of work for the indriyas because it simultaneously involves sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, imagination, memory, ahamkara, desire, fear, shame, attachment, power, tenderness, self-worth, and bodily identity. Therefore, the sexual sphere often becomes a place of strong adhyasa.

Sattvavajaya must not approach sexuality crudely, moralistically, or repressively. But it must see the force of this sphere. In sexual desire, the object easily ceases to be merely an object. It becomes a promise of fullness, confirmation of attractiveness, salvation from loneliness, a means of power, consolation, proof of love, escape from emptiness, or compensation for shame. Then raga becomes very strong, and buddhi can quickly lose clarity.

Sexual adhyasa manifests in different ways. One person identifies with the body and fears being unattractive. Another identifies with the role of a “successful man” or a “desired woman.” A third seeks confirmation of value through sexuality. A fourth escapes into it from anxiety. A fifth, on the contrary, suppresses the body out of fear, guilt, or shame. In all these cases, the body and the indriyas become not simply a place of pleasure, but a place of inner drama.

The therapeutic task of Sattvavajaya is not to destroy sexuality, but to return it to its proper place within a whole life. Desire must pass through buddhi, dharma, responsibility, respect for oneself and the other, and an understanding of consequences. If sexuality is governed only by the indriyas and raga, it easily becomes a source of dependence and suffering. If it is illuminated by buddhi and sattva, it can be part of mature human life.

8.10. Holding the Mind Back from Harmful Objects

The classical understanding of Sattvavajaya is connected with holding the mind back from harmful objects. Sattvavajaya is defined as the withdrawal and restraint of the mind from harmful objects, and then it is unfolded through jnana, vijnana, dhairya, smriti, and samadhi. This definition is especially important for the discussion of the indriyas.

A harmful object is not always something objectively bad. Sometimes the object itself is neutral, but for a particular person it is harmful because it strengthens his adhyasa, raga, dvesha, tamas, rajas, dependence, or loss of smriti. For one person, a sweet dish may be simply food; for another, an entrance into overeating. For one person, a social network may be a work tool; for another, a source of envy and distraction. For one person, a conversation may be an exchange of opinions; for another, a reason for anger and self-assertion. For one person, another human being may be a colleague; for another, the object of painful attachment.

Therefore, holding the mind back from harmful objects requires not a blind prohibition, but diagnosis. One must understand: which object captures me? How exactly does it act? What does it promise? What raga or dvesha does it evoke? What happens to manas? What does ahamkara appropriate? What does buddhi lose? What trace remains in chitta? After such analysis, limiting the object becomes not violence, but rational therapy.

8.11. How the Student Should Observe the Body and the Indriyas

Practice begins with observation. During the day, the student can notice which objects most often capture his indriyas. What does he automatically look at? Which sounds does he react to most strongly? Which tastes pull him toward repetition? Which touches calm or excite him? Which smells evoke memories? Which digital signals make him abandon a task? Which visual images evoke comparison, desire, shame, or envy?

Then one must observe not only the object, but also the further chain. After contact with the object, what does manas do? Does it begin to fantasize? Compare? Become anxious? Plan? Take offense? What does ahamkara say? “I need this,” “I am worse without this,” “I have been insulted,” “I must prove,” “I want to be like that.” What does buddhi do? Does it hold clarity, or does it begin to justify the impulse? What happens to smriti? Does the person remember his aim, or does he forget it?

Such observation gradually makes the indriyas conscious. A person stops being a passive consumer of impressions. He begins to understand that every object is not simply an external fact, but a possible beginning of an inner process. And then he becomes more careful not out of fear, but out of respect for his own mind.

8.12. Conclusion of the Chapter

The body and the indriyas are the first gates of psychic experience. Through the body, a person acts, perceives, and experiences the world; through the indriyas, objects enter manas and set in motion chains of desire, aversion, memory, identification, and choice. Sattvavajaya does not reject the body and the senses, but returns them to their proper place. The body must be an object of care, but not the absolute “I.” The indriyas must serve perception, but not govern the person. The object must remain an object, and not become a false center of personality.

Work with the body and the indriyas is the beginning of psychohygiene. Without it, it is impossible to restore sattva steadily. A mind that constantly feeds on chaotic impressions cannot be clear. Therefore, the student of Sattvavajaya must learn not only to think correctly, but also to see, hear, eat, speak, touch, use the digital environment, and choose impressions in such a way that they do not destroy inner order.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 8

For one day, keep a diary of the indriyas. Note five moments when an external object noticeably changed your state. For each moment, write down: which sense organ was involved; which object became vishaya; what happened to manas; whether raga or dvesha arose; what ahamkara appropriated; whether the clarity of buddhi remained; and what could have been done as a practice of pratyahara.

Review Questions

- Why must the body in Sattvavajaya be neither idolized nor despised?
- What are the indriyas, and why are they called the gates of experience?
- How does the sense object, vishaya, differ from an ordinary external object?
- Why can contact with an object become the beginning of suffering?
- How does the Bhagavad Gita describe the chain from the object of the senses to the loss of buddhi?
- What is psychohygiene of the indriyas?
- Why is the digital environment a modern form of testing the indriyas?
- What is pratyahara in the practical psychological sense?
- Why is sexuality a powerful field of adhyasa?
- How can one determine that a particular object is harmful for this particular person?

Brief Summary

In Sattvavajaya Chikitsa, the body and the indriyas are the first level through which experience enters. Through them, an object enters the field of the mind and can trigger desire, aversion, memory, comparison, fear, attachment, or false identification. Therefore, work with the mind begins not only with thoughts, but also with the culture of perception. The body requires care, the indriyas require discipline, objects require discrimination, and manas requires protection from the chaotic flow of impressions. Pratyahara becomes not a rejection of the world, but the return of the senses under the guidance of buddhi and sattva.

Chapter 9. Manas: The Mind That Runs After Objects

Key concepts: manas, sankalpa, vikalpa, bhavana, pratipaksha-bhavana, smriti, vritti.

After the body and the indriyas, we move to manas — to the level where an impression first becomes an inner psychological reality. For the beginner, this is one of the key chapters, because it is here that one begins to understand why the same object captures a person differently in different states.

In ordinary speech, the word “mind” is too vague. In Sattvavajaya, manas is not the whole inner world, but a specific function: it perceives, fluctuates, connects impressions, reaches, avoids, fantasizes, and initiates the primary movement toward or away from an object. If this distinction is kept, it becomes easier later to understand buddhi, ahamkara, and chitta.

In Sattvavajaya, manas is described as a sensory-mental function that processes signals from the indriyas, while buddhi discriminates truth from illusion, ahamkara creates the sense of a separate “I,” and chitta stores impressions. This distinction is the basis of diagnosis. If the specialist does not distinguish manas from buddhi, he will confuse reaction with reason. If he does not distinguish manas from ahamkara, he will not understand how a simple impression turns into a personal drama. If he does not distinguish manas from chitta, he will not see why a current reaction is often fed by a past trace.

9.1. Manas as the Inner Mediator

Manas stands between the indriyas and the deeper functions of the psyche. The indriyas bring impressions: form, sound, smell, taste, touch. But the sense organs by themselves do not yet create a full psychological reaction. They only open the door. Manas receives the impression and begins to process it: “What is this?”, “Is it pleasant or unpleasant?”, “Do I need it?”, “Is it dangerous?”, “Do I want to approach it?”, “Should I avoid it?”, “What does this mean for me?”

If a person sees the face of someone familiar, sight transmits form, but manas immediately animates the image: is this person pleasant or unpleasant, safe or dangerous, desired or repulsive, connected with joy or pain? If a person hears a tone of voice, hearing transmits sound, but manas begins interpretation: am I being respected or humiliated, threatened or supported? If a person senses taste, manas quickly connects it with pleasure, memory, the desire to repeat, or aversion.

Therefore, manas may be called the inner mediator between the world and reaction. It does not merely receive data. It immediately begins to move. This is its strength and its danger. Without manas, a person could not orient himself in the world, but if manas is not under the guidance of buddhi, it turns into a restless mediator that reacts faster than the person manages to become aware.

9.2. Sankalpa and Vikalpa: The Movement of Choice and Doubt

In the traditional description, manas is connected with sankalpa and vikalpa. Sankalpa is a clear intention, direction, an inner decision that has passed through buddhi. Vikalpa is an option, doubt, fluctuation, the construction of alternatives. Through these two functions, we can see how manas moves between “to do” and “not to do,” “to approach” and “to step back,” “to speak” and “to remain silent,” “to choose” and “to postpone.”

In a healthy state, this capacity is useful. A person must consider options, sense the situation, evaluate consequences, and choose a path. But if manas becomes too strong and does not rely on buddhi, it turns life into endless fluctuation. Then the person does not act, but thinks about action; does not choose, but sorts through options; does not decide, but anxiously models future consequences.

This gives rise to a state very familiar to the modern person: mental overload without real movement. A person may think for hours about a project and not do it, analyze relationships and not speak honestly, study health and not change his regimen, read about spiritual practice and not practice. Manas creates the feeling of activity, but understanding does not pass into action.

For knowledge to become strength, it must pass through several stages. First, truth must be heard: this is shravana, the receiving of correct knowledge and orientation. Then it must be reflected upon: manana, or chinta, turns what has been heard into considered discrimination. But even this is not enough. Bhavana means repeated contemplative assimilation, through which knowledge ceases to be merely information and becomes a state, smriti, and practical action.

In the Vedantic tradition, a close scheme is often formulated as shravana, manana, and nididhyasana. There is no contradiction here. Bhavana is a broader term designating the contemplative cultivation of knowledge or a state, while nididhyasana is the Vedantic designation for deep abiding in the truth that has already been heard and reflected upon. In the practical logic of Sattvavajaya, one may say this: shravana gives knowledge, manana establishes it in buddhi, and bhavana, or in the Vedantic context nididhyasana, makes this knowledge a stable inner state.

Here it is important to distinguish sankalpa and bhavana. Sankalpa sets the direction, but by itself it does not yet guarantee change. It is like the seed of intention. Bhavana grows the state, smriti holds the memory of what is correct, dhriti supports steadiness, and karma tests everything through action. Without bhavana, sankalpa may remain a beautiful thought; without action, bhavana may remain an inner experience that has not entered life.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya works not only with what a person has decided, but also with what he grows in the mind every day. If he returns many times to fear, he performs bhavana of fear. If he constantly turns resentment over in his mind, he performs bhavana of resentment. If he again and again returns attention to dharma, clarity, gratitude, beneficial action, and correct understanding, he gradually cultivates a sattvic state.

The practical question for the student is simple: what sankalpa do I declare, and what bhavana do I actually perform? I say that I want peace, but every day I feed the mind with anxious images. I say that I want action, but I cultivate fear of mistake. I say that I want spiritual clarity, but I feed comparison, envy, and resentment. It is precisely here that manas must be returned under the guidance of buddhi: what do I choose not only in words, but through attention, repetition, and action?

9.3. Bhavana: How the Mind Cultivates a State

Bhavana means cultivation, growing, inner saturation. The meaning of this term is connected not with a single thought, but with gradual becoming: not simply to think about something, but to make it a living state of the mind. In Ayurvedic pharmacy, bhavana denotes a process in which a substance is repeatedly ground and saturated with juice or decoction, absorbing its properties. In the psychology of Sattvavajaya, this image helps us understand how the mind becomes saturated with that on which it holds attention for a long time.

This is why it is important to distinguish receiving knowledge from its inner maturation. A truth that has been heard does not yet change life until it returns in contemplation, speech, choice, and daily karma. Bhavana makes knowledge repeatable and viable.

Sankalpa is like a seed: it sets intention. Manas is like soil: it receives impressions. Bhavana is like watering and care: it gradually grows what the person inwardly becomes. If a person returns every day to anxious images, he performs bhavana of fear. If he constantly turns resentment over in his mind, he performs bhavana of resentment. If he again and again contemplates what is correct, restores smriti, strengthens buddhi, chooses a sattvic environment, speech, nutrition, action, and attention, he performs bhavana of sattva.

It is important to emphasize: the mind does not change merely because a person once read a correct thought. It changes when the correct thought is repeatedly lived, contemplated, remembered, connected with the body, speech, choice, action, and way of life. Therefore, bhavana is one of the key mechanisms by which knowledge becomes a stable state. For educational clarity, it is useful to remember a simple formula: sankalpa is the seed of intention; bhavana is the cultivation of the state; dhriti is the holding of direction; smriti is the memory of what is correct; karma is embodiment through action.

9.4. Pratipaksha-bhavana: Cultivating the Opposite

Pratipaksha-bhavana is a method in which, when a destructive tendency arises, the mind is not suppressed by crude force, but is given a new direction. If anger arises, a person is not obliged to immediately believe the anger and act from it. He can see it, stop the vega, activate buddhi, and begin to cultivate the opposite quality: clarity, compassion, patience, measure, and understanding of consequences.

If envy arises, the opposite is not self-accusation, but a return to one's own dharma and recognition of another person's path. If fear arises, the opposite is not a fantasy of complete safety, but the cultivation of stability, support, and sober action. If greed rises, the opposite becomes measure and contentment. Pratipaksha-bhavana helps avoid feeding a destructive samskara with new attention.

This method is not reducible to positive thinking and is not self-deception. It does not propose calling evil good or fear joy. Its task is different: not to allow a destructive tendency to become the master of manas, and to consciously cultivate the quality that returns the mind to sattva. Therefore, pratipaksha is not chosen arbitrarily or according to the principle of pleasant replacement. First, buddhi must discriminate what exactly has seized the mind: anger, fear, envy, greed, resentment, raga, dvesha, or tamas. Only after this, through bhavana, the opposite quality is cultivated, one that truly works as a therapeutic antidote. Otherwise, a person may calm the wrong cause and merely subtly bypass the main obscuration.

9.5. Manas and Objects: Why the Mind Is Easily Captured

By nature, manas tends to move toward objects. This is not an error, but its function. It is made for connection with the world. But if connection with objects becomes ungoverned, manas loses stability. An object gives rise to an impression, the impression gives rise to interest, interest passes into reflection, and reflection strengthens attachment. This is why the Bhagavad Gita describes the law: while contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment; from attachment desire is born, and from desire, when obstructed, anger arises and further loss of clarity follows.

It is important to understand that attachment does not always begin with strong desire. Sometimes it begins with repeated attention. A person simply thinks about the object again and again. He looks at it, remembers it, fantasizes, compares, returns it into inner dialogue. Gradually, the object becomes more significant than it was at the beginning. Manas, as it were, lays down a path toward it. The more often it walks this path, the easier it becomes to return there again.

This is how many dependencies are formed. At first, a person simply looks through a social media feed. Then manas becomes accustomed to novelty. Then it becomes bored without stimuli. Then buddhi already understands that this destroys time, attention, and sleep, but manas still reaches toward it. Ahamkara may add: “I need to stay informed,” “I am resting,” “I have the right,” “this is my work.” Chitta records traces of pleasure. Smriti of the aim is lost. Thus a simple object turns into a hook.

Sattvavajaya works not only with the object itself, but also with the movement of manas toward it. Sometimes the object must be limited. Sometimes the fantasy around it must be weakened. Sometimes one must see what the object promises. Sometimes the mind must be returned to action. Sometimes smriti must be restored: why do I live, what is beneficial now, what do I serve, what will happen if I again follow this movement?

9.6. Manas in Rajas

When manas is under the influence of rajas, it becomes fast, excited, restless, impatient, and greedy for impressions. Such a mind constantly seeks an object. It finds it difficult to remain in silence. It needs to check messages, make plans, compare itself, argue, prove, achieve, worry, and control. It may look productive on the outside, but inwardly there is often not clarity, but tension.

Rajasic manas is especially characteristic of the modern human being. It may simultaneously listen to a lecture, look at notifications, think about money, remember a conflict, plan a post, worry about the future, and feel tired. Outwardly, this may be called multitasking, but from the point of view of Sattvavajaya it is the scattering of manas. Such a mind loses depth. It touches much, but assimilates little. It reacts much, but understands little. It wants much, but does not always act correctly.

Rajasic manas often creates anxiety. It constantly runs ahead and tries to control the future in advance. Buddhi may understand that there is no direct threat now, but manas is already building scenarios. It asks: “what if it does not work?”, “what if I am judged?”, “what if I lose?”, “what if it is too late?” The more it turns these scenarios over, the more the body enters tension, the breath changes, sleep is disturbed, and anxiety receives bodily support.

Therapy for rajasic manas requires slowing down, limiting stimuli, breathing, regimen, reducing digital noise, a clear structure of the day, bodily grounding, simple actions, and the restoration of buddhi. For such a person, it is often useless to speak immediately about deep contemplation. First, the ability to stop must be restored.

9.7. Manas in Tamas

Tamasic manas is marked not by fussiness, but by heaviness. It does not want to see, does not want to choose, does not want to act, does not want to acknowledge consequences. It may go into sleepiness, apathy, procrastination, denial, dull stubbornness, freezing, meaningless consumption, overeating, passive envy, or inner deafness. If the rajasic mind moves too quickly, the tamasic mind seems to get stuck.

Tamas often disguises itself. A person may call it “I need to rest,” although in reality he is not recovering, but sinking into inertia. He may say “I do not care,” although fear of action is hidden behind this. He may consider his passivity humility, although this is not humility, but a refusal of dharma. He may say “I accept everything as it is,” although in reality he is avoiding responsibility.

Sattvavajaya must distinguish healthy rest from tamas. Healthy rest makes a person clearer, kinder, more stable, and more capable of action. Tamasic rest makes him heavier, cloudier, weaker, and further from action. This is an important diagnostic criterion.

Work with tamasic manas often begins not with subtle philosophical conversations, but with enlivening: regimen, light, movement, simple discipline, cleaning the space, reducing heavy food and heavy impressions, small achievable actions, contact with a sattvic environment, support, and clear instruction. Buddhi in tamas may be so closed that energy must first be raised, and only after that can a deeper conversation begin.

9.8. Manas in Sattva

Sattvic manas is clear, receptive, gentle, stable, and obedient to buddhi. It is not an empty or dead mind. There may be thoughts, feelings, plans, and perceptions in it, but they do not create chaos. Such a manas is capable of listening, observing, learning, admitting error, holding attention, not rushing immediately after an object, not collapsing from criticism, and not becoming intoxicated by praise.

Sattvic manas does not mean that a person becomes emotionless. On the contrary, feelings become cleaner. Joy does not turn into excited greed. Sadness does not become bottomless tamas. Anger, if it arises, passes more quickly through buddhi and does not destroy speech. Desire can be examined and transformed into sankalpa. Fear can be heard, but it does not necessarily become the master of behavior.

The main sign of sattvic manas is the ability to reflect reality without gross distortion. Just as a clean mirror reflects a face, a sattvic mind reflects a situation. It sees: here is the fact, here is my reaction, here is an old trace, here is desire, here is fear, here is the right action. In rajas, the mirror trembles. In tamas, it is covered with dirt. In sattva, it becomes fit for knowledge.

Therefore, increasing sattva is not an abstract spiritual goal, but a practical psychological task. Without sattva, manas cannot become an instrument of therapy. It is either excited or obscured. Sattva makes smriti, viveka, and stable action possible.

9.9. Manas, Ahamkara, and Personal Drama

Manas by itself brings an impression and reaction, but personal drama arises when ahamkara appropriates this movement. For example, manas registers: “this is unpleasant to me.” Ahamkara adds: “I have been humiliated.” Manas sees: “this person is successful.” Ahamkara adds: “I am worse.” Manas feels: “I want this.” Ahamkara adds: “without this, I am nobody.” Manas notices: “I have been refused.” Ahamkara adds: “I am not loved; I have no value.”

It is precisely this appropriation that turns ordinary impressions into the suffering of the personality. If an unpleasant sensation remains simply an unpleasant sensation, one can work with it. If it becomes a story about “my destroyed self,” it is intensified many times over. Therefore, the Sattvavajaya specialist must see where the reaction of manas ends and the appropriation of ahamkara begins.

In practice, this can be examined through the question: “What did this event come to mean about me?” If a person says, “He did not answer my message,” this is a fact. If he says, “That means he does not need me,” this is an interpretation. If then there appears “it is always like this with me,” chitta is raising an old trace. If “I am unworthy of love” arises, ahamkara has appropriated the event as proof of identity. Sattvavajaya must return the event to its place: not answering does not equal “I am worthless.” The rope must become a rope again.

9.10. Manas and Chitta: Why the Mind Repeats the Old

Manas rarely reacts only to the present object. Very often its movement is fed by the traces of chitta — accumulated impressions, samskaras, and vasanas that already exist within. Therefore, one and the same external stimulus evokes completely different reactions in different people: the current object does not meet an empty mind, but an already prepared inner soil.

For example, a person hears a teacher's remark. The remark itself may be correct and calm. But if there is a strong trace of humiliation in chitta, manas perceives the remark as an attack. Ahamkara defends itself. Rajas raises anger or anxiety. Buddhi loses clarity. The person reacts not to the teacher, but to an old trace raised through a new contact.

This is how repetition arises. Manas goes again and again along familiar paths because chitta stores them. Vasana pulls toward certain objects, relationships, scenarios, pleasures, or sufferings. A person may even understand that he is repeating a harmful cycle, but manas still returns because the trace is strong. Sattvavajaya works with this through the observation of repetitions: which situation repeats, which object triggers the reaction, which thought comes first, and what new action is capable of not strengthening the old samskara.

9.11. Manas and Buddhi: Who Should Govern

In a healthy inner hierarchy, manas must listen to buddhi. This does not mean that buddhi must suppress all feelings. It means that the final direction must be determined by discrimination, not by impulse. Manas may say: “I want.” Buddhi must ask: “Is this beneficial, does it correspond to dharma, where will it lead, is it not a hook?” Manas may say: “I am afraid.” Buddhi must determine: “Is this a real danger or an old samskara?” Manas may say: “I am tired.” Buddhi must distinguish: “Is rest needed, or is this tamasic avoidance?”

When buddhi is weak, manas begins to govern. Then a person lives from impulse to impulse. He may be intelligent, educated, talented, but if buddhi does not guide manas, his life will be unstable. He will know, but not do. Understand, but break down. Make promises, but forget. Begin, but abandon. Love, but destroy. Want purity, but feed the mind with dirt. Seek freedom, but go after every object.

Sattvavajaya strengthens buddhi not in order to make the person rigid, but so that manas receives reliable guidance. Strong buddhi is like a wise charioteer. It does not kill the horses, but holds the reins. The indriyas and manas possess energy, but this energy must lead toward the goal, not drag the chariot into an abyss.

9.12. Manas and Smriti: Why a Person Forgets What Is Right

In Sattvavajaya, smriti is the memory of what is right, held within a living situation. It is not only memory of facts. It is the ability to remember oneself; to remember the aim; to remember consequences; to remember dharma; to remember that the object is not the source of absolute happiness; to remember that an emotion will pass; to remember that one is not obliged to act from the first impulse.

Manas without smriti easily becomes a slave of the present impression. Everything that is bright right now seems most important. Everything that is pleasant right now seems necessary. Everything that is frightening right now seems like an absolute threat. Smriti restores the depth of time and meaning: I have already seen this cycle; I know where it leads; I remember what is beneficial for me; I remember who I am deeper than this reaction.

The practice of Sattvavajaya must strengthen smriti. For this, repetition, journaling, instruction, morning intention, evening review, mantra, reading, communication with sattvic people, and regular pauses before action are needed.

9.13. Manas and Speech

Manas is closely connected with speech. Inner dialogue often turns into external words. If manas is excited, speech becomes fast, sharp, verbose, argumentative, accusatory, or anxious. If manas is in tamas, speech may become heavy, crude, unclear, or evasive. If manas is in sattva, speech becomes more precise, softer, more truthful, and more beneficial.

Speech is one of the main places where the state of the mind becomes visible. A person may say, “I am calm,” but his speech will reveal irritation. He may speak of love, but his words will be full of control. He may speak of spirituality, but his speech will humiliate others. He may say, “I do not care,” but constantly return to the same topic. Therefore, the Sattvavajaya specialist must listen not only to the content of words, but also to the quality of speech: tempo, repetitions, emotional coloring, appropriation, accusation, avoidance, and generalizations.

Work with speech helps work with manas. If a person learns to pause before answering, he already creates space between manas and action. If he stops repeating the same complaint many times, he stops feeding the corresponding vritti. If he learns to speak more precisely, buddhi is strengthened. If he replaces self-deception with honest recognition, smriti returns. Therefore, in Sattvavajaya, speech is not merely communication, but a therapeutic instrument.

9.14. How to Calm Manas

The calming of manas must not be understood as suppression. A suppressed mind is not sattvic. It may be outwardly silent, while inwardly remaining tense, resentful, frightened, or heavy. True calming is the return of manas to clarity and governability.

The first path is the limitation of harmful objects. If the mind is constantly excited by the same impressions, contact must be reduced. This is not weakness, but reasonable pratyahara. The second path is breathing. Breath is directly connected with the state of the mind. Smooth, calm breathing with a lengthened exhalation helps reduce rajas and return attention to the body. The third path is regimen. Manas needs predictability: sleep, food, work, rest, and practice. The fourth path is clear action. Unresolved tasks often keep manas in agitation. The fifth path is sattvic impressions: reading, nature, pure speech, good communication, mantra, prayer, contemplation, and service.

But the main path is the guidance of buddhi. Manas should not calm down only because everything around has become quiet. It must gradually learn to listen to discrimination. Then, even in the midst of the world, it becomes more stable.

9.15. Diagnosis of the State of Manas

For practical work, it is useful to ask several questions. The first question is: where does the mind return by itself? This shows the main object of attachment or anxiety. The second: what does the mind repeat? This shows the active vritti. The third: what does the mind avoid? This shows dvesha or fear. The fourth: what does the mind justify? This shows where buddhi may be serving raga. The fifth: after which impressions does the mind become cloudier or more restless? This shows harmful objects. The sixth: what makes the mind clearer? This shows sattvic supports.

One can also observe the tempo of manas. A fast, jumping, excited mind points to rajas. A heavy, sticky mind that refuses to see points to tamas. A calm, clear, receptive mind points to sattva. But it is important to remember that the gunas can mix. There may be a rajasic-tamasic mind: a person is anxious and paralyzed at the same time. There may be sattva mixed with rajas: clear activity. There may be tamas disguised as pseudo-calmness. Therefore, diagnosis requires observation and honesty.

9.16. Conclusion of the Chapter

Manas is an inner function that receives impressions from the indriyas, doubts, fluctuates, creates alternatives, reacts to objects, and easily moves toward the pleasant or away from the unpleasant. It is necessary for life, but without the guidance of buddhi it becomes a source of restlessness, attachment, fantasy, anxiety, procrastination, and inner chaos. In rajas, manas rushes about; in tamas, it becomes clouded; in sattva, it becomes clear and governable.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa begins with the observation of manas and gradually returns it under the guidance of buddhi, smriti, and viveka. The goal is not to destroy the mind, but to make it a transparent instrument of consciousness, capable of perceiving the world without gross distortion and acting not from the first impulse, but from inner order.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 9

For three days, observe your manas. Three times a day, write down: where the mind most often returns; which thought repeats; what the mind avoids; which object evokes raga or dvesha; what state the gunas are in — sattva, rajas, or tamas; which sankalpa you held today; which bhavana you actually performed; which pratipaksha-bhavana could return the mind under the guidance of buddhi; and what one action could confirm this direction. At the end of the third day, draw a conclusion: which main object or theme most often captures your manas?

Review Questions

- How does manas differ from buddhi?
- Why is manas called the mediator between the indriyas and the inner psyche?
- What are sankalpa and vikalpa?
- How does bhavana differ from sankalpa?
- What is pratipaksha-bhavana, and why is it not reducible to suppression?
- How does manas manifest in rajas?
- How does manas manifest in tamas?
- What are the signs of sattvic manas?
- How does ahamkara turn a reaction of manas into a personal drama?
- Why does manas often repeat old reactions from chitta?
- How does smriti help hold manas back from a harmful object?

Brief Summary

Manas is one of the main functions of a person's inner life. It receives impressions, doubts, chooses, reacts, fantasizes, and moves toward objects. Its state depends on the gunas, indriyas, chitta, ahamkara, smriti, and the strength of buddhi. Sankalpa sets direction, bhavana cultivates a state, and pratipaksha-bhavana helps replace a destructive tendency with the opposite quality. When manas is ungoverned, a person becomes dependent on impressions, desires, fears, and external stimuli. When manas is purified and subordinated to buddhi, it becomes an instrument of clear perception, right action, and the restoration of sattva.

Chapter 10. Buddhi: Discriminating Reason

Key concepts: buddhi, viveka, prajnaparadha, dharma, smriti.

After manas, the book turns to buddhi — discriminating reason. For the student, this is the central practical node: manas may desire, fear, and fluctuate, but it is buddhi that must see what is true, what is beneficial, and what action is right now.

Here it is important to remove a common confusion from the very beginning. Buddhi is not simply intellect and not simply education. A person may be very intelligent, yet use the mind to justify desire, fear, pride, or self-deception. Therefore, in this book buddhi is always connected not with erudition, but with viveka, smriti, and dharma.

Buddhi is discriminating reason. Its main function is to see the difference between the beneficial and the harmful, the true and the false, the temporary and the essential, dharma and whim, sankalpa and blind desire, real danger and the fantasy of manas, healthy responsibility and neurotic control. In this system, buddhi is directly defined as discriminating reason, while prajnaparadha is the error of this reason, lying at the root of many disturbances of life and health.

10.1. Buddhi and Manas: Who Should Lead

To understand buddhi, we must once again return to the distinction between manas and buddhi. Manas brings options. Buddhi chooses the direction. Manas says: “I want,” “I am afraid,” “I doubt,” “what if,” “what if this happens,” “this is pleasant to me,” “this is unpleasant to me.” Buddhi must ask: “What is true here?”, “What is beneficial?”, “What corresponds to dharma?”, “What will be the consequence?”, “What is the right action now?”

If buddhi is strong, manas is not suppressed, but receives guidance. A person may feel desire, but not follow it blindly. He may experience anger, but not destroy speech. He may fear, but not take fear as final truth. He may doubt, yet still choose action. He may see an attractive object, but not make it the center of life.

If buddhi is weak, manas begins to govern. Then the person lives in reaction mode. He moves toward the pleasant and away from the unpleasant, justifies impulses, postpones what is difficult, seeks consolation, takes offense, compares, worries, promises himself to begin tomorrow, and again follows the old circle. Outwardly he may be intelligent, but inwardly ungoverned. This is why Sattvavajaya is not limited to the development of intellect. What is needed here is the maturity of buddhi.

10.2. Buddhi as the Organ of Viveka

The main power of buddhi is viveka, discrimination. Viveka allows one to see that the body is the body, not the whole Self; a thought is a thought, not absolute truth; an emotion is a state, not a command; desire is a movement of manas, not an obligatory destiny; another person's opinion is an object, not the measure of inner worth; the fruit of action is a result, not the source of complete happiness.

Viveka begins with simple distinctions. For example, a person says: "I am terrified, therefore everything really is dangerous." Buddhi must distinguish: there is the fact, there is the bodily reaction, there is fantasy, there is an old samskara, there is real probability, and there is an action that can be taken. Or a person says: "I want this, therefore I need it." Buddhi must ask: does this desire lead to clarity or to dependence? Is this sankalpa or a hook of desire? Does this correspond to dharma or merely feed raga?

Without viveka, a person lives in fusion. He fuses with emotion, desire, role, image, another person's evaluation, or past experience. Viveka creates space. It does not destroy the experience, but it stops allowing it to be the only voice. In this space, therapy becomes possible.

In the Vivekachudamani, the path of discrimination is presented as a direct path to the knowledge of the true nature of the human being: Shankara emphasizes that lasting happiness is attained through jnana, and jnana through inquiry and discrimination. For Sattvavajaya, this means that without buddhi and viveka, deep healing of the mind is impossible.

10.3. Prajnaparadha: When Reason Betrays Knowledge

One of the most important concepts of Ayurveda and Sattvavajaya is prajnaparadha. It may be translated as an error of reason, a violation of wisdom, or an offense against discriminating knowledge. But this expression must be understood not as moral accusation, but as an accurate diagnosis of an inner process.

Prajnaparadha arises when a person knows, or is capable of knowing, what is right, but acts contrary to this knowledge. He knows that going to bed late destroys health, but continues sitting on his phone. He knows that overeating will worsen his condition, but eats for consolation. He knows that anger will destroy a relationship, but speaks from anger. He knows that a toxic person will hurt him again, but returns out of attachment. He knows that comparison destroys his mind, but continues looking at other people's display windows of life. This is not simply a lack of information. It is a disturbance of the inner authority of buddhi.

Prajnaparadha shows that knowledge by itself does not yet heal. Between knowledge and action there is an inner power of holding. If it is absent, knowledge remains weak. A person may read dozens of books, take courses, listen to lectures, understand the causes of his states, but at the moment of contact with the object lose himself again. This means that buddhi has not become a living force.

Sattvavajaya works precisely with this gap between understanding and action. It strengthens buddhi, restores smriti, reduces raga and dvesha, teaches one to see consequences, purifies manas, limits harmful objects, and forms new sattvic habits. Only then does knowledge begin to become behavior.

10.4. Buddhi and Smriti: Remembering What Is Right at the Moment of Pressure

Buddhi does not act separately from smriti. A person may understand what is right once, but if he does not remember it at the necessary moment, understanding does not save him. Smriti is the ability to hold correct knowledge in a living situation. Buddhi sees; smriti holds. If smriti weakens, buddhi seems to temporarily disappear from access.

For example, in the morning a person clearly understands: “Today I will not enter into conflict; I will speak calmly; I will not prove myself from pride.” But in the evening he hears an unpleasant phrase, manas becomes excited, ahamkara appropriates it — “I have been humiliated” — rajas raises heat, and all the morning clarity disappears. This is the loss of smriti. Buddhi may have been clear, but it did not hold at the moment of contact with the object.

This is why repetition, journaling, instruction, mantra, morning sankalpa, evening review, a sattvic environment, and regular return to key truths are important in Sattvavajaya. Smriti is not strengthened by accident. It is formed through repeated return to what is right. Then, at the moment of pressure, an inner phrase, image, or clarity appears that stops automatism: “I already know this path,” “this is raga,” “this is an old samskara,” “now I must remain silent,” “now I must act,” “this object is not me.”

10.5. Buddhi and Ahamkara: When Reason Serves the Ego

One of the subtlest and most dangerous distortions is the subordination of buddhi to ahamkara. In this state, a person uses reason not for truth, but to protect the image of “I.” He knows how to reason, but reasons in favor of his attachment. He knows how to argue, but argues for victory. He knows how to analyze, but analyzes in such a way as not to admit error. He knows how to explain, but explains his dependence in beautiful words.

This state is especially dangerous in educated people. The stronger the intellect, the subtler the self-deception. A person may justify anger as “defending boundaries,” attachment as “love,” laziness as “taking care of oneself,” fear as “intuition,” pride as “dignity,” spiritual avoidance as “non-attachment,” tamas as “acceptance,” and rajas as “service to the cause.”

Buddhi becomes true discriminating reason only when it is able to see the truth that is disadvantageous to ahamkara. For example: “Right now I am not defending truth; I am defending an image of myself”; “I call this love, but there is much dependence here”; “I speak about freedom, but in reality I am avoiding responsibility”; “I consider myself a victim, but I do not want to see my own contribution”; “I am covering desire with philosophy.” Such honesty is painful for ahamkara, but healing for buddhi.

Sattvavajaya requires precisely this kind of buddhi — not merely intelligent, but truthful.

10.6. Buddhi and Raga: How Desire Distorts Discrimination

Raga — attraction to an object — is one of the main factors that distorts buddhi. When an object promises pleasure, safety, status, love, recognition, or fullness, buddhi begins to lose independence. A person does not see the object as it is, but through the promise of happiness. At this moment, reason often begins to serve desire.

For example, a person wants to buy an expensive thing not because it is truly needed, but because it promises an image of success. Manas is drawn toward it, ahamkara says: “With this, I will be more significant,” and raga intensifies. Buddhi may at first see that the purchase is unreasonable, but then begins to search for justifications: “It is an investment,” “I deserve it,” “It is important for my image,” “I will earn it back later.” Reason is no longer discriminating; it is servicing raga.

The same happens in relationships. A person may see warning signs, but the desire for closeness is so strong that buddhi begins to minimize them. “He is just tired,” “she will change,” “I am simply too sensitive,” “love can endure everything.” Sometimes this may be mature patience, but often it is a loss of discrimination because of raga.

Buddhi must be able to ask desire questions: what do you promise? What will happen after the object is obtained? At what cost? Does this correspond to dharma? What will I lose if I follow this? What am I really seeking? Can this be received in a purer way? Is the object not a hook?

10.7. Buddhi and Dvesha: How Aversion and Fear Distort Choice

Dvesha — repulsion, rejection, avoidance — distorts buddhi no less than desire. If raga makes an object appear too attractive, then dvesha makes an object appear too threatening, repulsive, or impossible. A person avoids not only what is harmful, but also what is beneficial if it is connected with discomfort.

For example, a person avoids a conversation because he fears conflict. Buddhi may understand that the conversation is needed, but dvesha toward the unpleasant feeling is stronger. A person postpones study because he is afraid to encounter his own incompetence. He avoids a physician because he fears the diagnosis. He does not begin a project because he fears failure. He does not ask forgiveness because he fears losing pride. Thus dvesha keeps him in the old state.

Dvesha often disguises itself as rationality. “Now is not the time,” “I need to prepare,” “I will wait for the right moment,” “this is not mine,” “I do not want to violate myself.” Sometimes these words may be true. But buddhi must distinguish: is this really a reasonable pause or avoidance? Is this self-care or fear? Is this a mature “no” or tamasic protection?

Sattvavajaya teaches one to see dvesha as a force that also binds one to the object. A person may be dependent not only on what he wants, but also on what he fears. The object he avoids continues to govern him. Freedom appears when buddhi can look both at the desired and at the unpleasant without slavery.

10.8. Buddhi and the Gunas

Buddhi as discriminating reason can be colored by the gunas. This is an important topic for diagnosis.

Buddhi in sattva sees calmly, honestly, and holistically. It does not hurry, distort, justify desire, or hide from unpleasant truth. It can distinguish dharma from whim, benefit from harm, the inner center from the object. Such buddhi is not necessarily cold; it may be gentle, while remaining clear.

Buddhi in rajas is active, but biased. It may be very quick, logical, and convincing, but it often serves achievement, argument, competition, control, the desire to win, or the desire to obtain the fruit. Buddhi in rajas easily turns reason into an instrument of ambition. It asks not “what is true?”, but “how can I achieve?”, “how can I prove?”, “how can I win?”, “how can I get?”

Buddhi in tamas is obscured. It does not see the obvious, confuses the harmful with the beneficial, justifies inertia, denies consequences, and resists knowledge. In tamas, a person may call the destructive normal, the beneficial unnecessary, weakness destiny, crudeness strength, dependence love. In the Bhagavad Gita, the distinction of buddhi according to the gunas is an important theme: buddhi in sattva distinguishes action and inaction, what should and should not be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation; buddhi in rajas sees this unclearly; buddhi in tamas takes the false for the true.

For practice, this means that one cannot simply “explain” what is right to a person if his buddhi is currently in tamas. First, the system must be brought out of heaviness. One also cannot trust the quick decisions of a person in rajas if he is seized by the fruit. One must slow down, cool the state, and restore smriti. Buddhi in sattva requires a sattvic environment.

10.9. Buddhi and Dharma

Buddhi is needed not only for solving everyday tasks. Its highest practical function is to see dharma. Dharma is not simply a moral rule. It is the right order of action corresponding to a person's nature, situation, duty, time, place, inner maturity, and highest aim. Sometimes dharma is pleasant, sometimes difficult. Sometimes it requires softness, sometimes firmness. Sometimes an action corresponding to dharma brings immediate pleasure, and sometimes discomfort. Therefore, without buddhi, dharma cannot be seen.

Manas often chooses what is pleasant. Ahamkara chooses what is advantageous for the image of "I." Raga chooses what is desired. Dvesha chooses avoidance of what is unpleasant. Tamas chooses inaction. Rajas chooses achievement. Buddhi must ask: what is right? Not only "what do I want?", not only "what am I afraid of?", not only "how do I look?", not only "what will people say?", but precisely: what corresponds to dharma?

For the Sattvavajaya specialist, this is especially important. His task is not merely to help a person feel better. Sometimes the right action initially causes discomfort. It is unpleasant to admit an error. It is difficult to stop a dependence. It is frightening to set a boundary. It is inconvenient to begin treatment. It is hard to come out of tamas. But if this corresponds to dharma, buddhi must lead the person there.

Therapy deprived of dharma can become the servicing of the client's desires. Sattvavajaya must not help a person justify adhyasa more skillfully. It must help him see and act more correctly.

10.10. Strengthening Buddhi

Buddhi is strengthened in several ways.

The first way is correct knowledge, jnana. A person must know how the mind is structured, what raga and dvesha are, how adhyasa works, why smriti is lost, and how the gunas color perception. Without knowledge, buddhi has nothing to work with.

The second way is reflection, manana. It is not enough to hear the truth. It must be thought through, applied to oneself, and tested in experience. The student should not merely repeat, “raga leads to suffering,” but see how a specific raga in his life leads to a specific cycle.

The third way is observation of consequences. Buddhi becomes stronger when a person honestly sees the result of his actions. If I eat this, what happens? If I argue from anger, what happens? If I watch the feed until late at night, what happens? If I postpone, what happens? Consequence teaches buddhi better than abstract morality.

The fourth way is small right choices. Buddhi is strengthened by action. Every time a person chooses the beneficial instead of the harmful, a pause instead of an impulse, truth instead of self-deception, action instead of procrastination, pratyahara instead of slavery to the object, buddhi gains strength.

The fifth way is a sattvic environment. Communication, food, sleep, speech, study, space, teacher, books, and practice can all support or destroy buddhi. One cannot strengthen discrimination while constantly living among objects that obscure it.

10.11. Errors in Developing Buddhi

There are several errors the student must avoid.

The first error is confusing buddhi with cold rationalism. The strength of buddhi does not make a person dry. It makes him clear. It can be combined with compassion, warmth, softness, and love. Moreover, without sattva, buddhi becomes a dry instrument of control, not wisdom.

The second error is using buddhi to suppress manas. If a person says, “I must not feel,” “this is all nonsense,” “one must simply be above this,” he may not be healing the mind, but repressing its states. Buddhi must understand manas, not humiliate it.

The third error is turning discrimination into judgment. To see tamas does not mean to despise a person. To see raga does not mean to shame. To see adhyasa does not mean to attack. Buddhi is joined with sattva; therefore, it discriminates without cruelty.

The fourth error is assuming that buddhi is already strong if a person knows a lot. Knowledge is tested at the moment of contact with the object. If a person speaks of non-attachment but collapses from criticism, his buddhi is not yet stable. If he speaks of dharma but does not fulfill his duties, knowledge has not become strength. If he speaks of sattva but feeds the mind with rajas and tamas, discrimination has not become established.

10.12. Buddhi in the Work of the Specialist

A Sattvavajaya specialist must develop buddhi not only in the client, but also in himself. In working with people, it is easy to fall into traps: the desire to help quickly, fear of not being liked, the wish to prove competence, attachment to the result, irritation at the client's resistance, pride from success, discouragement from failure. All of this can obscure the specialist's buddhi.

The strength of the specialist's buddhi manifests in the ability to see the process, not only the client's words. The client may ask the specialist to support his raga, but the specialist must notice dependence. He may complain about others, but the specialist must see ahamkara and dvesha. He may cover tamas with beautiful explanations, but the specialist must gently return him to action. He may want immediate relief, but the specialist must distinguish what is more beneficial now: to comfort, clarify, limit, direct, give a practice, or recommend medical help.

The specialist's buddhi also manifests in ethics. One must know the boundaries of one's competence. If the client's condition requires a physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, or crisis support, this must not be replaced with spiritual reasoning. Sattvavajaya must not become a way of denying the reality of severe states. The strength of buddhi helps one see where spiritual-psychological work is appropriate and where other help is needed.

10.13. Conclusion of the Chapter

Buddhi is discriminating reason, the central therapeutic function of Sattvavajaya Chikitsa. It must guide manas, recognize raga and dvesha, see adhyasa, hold dharma, distinguish the beneficial from the harmful, the true from the false, the temporary from the essential. When buddhi is strong and sattvic, a person is able not to merge with the first impulse, not to be a slave of the object, and not to lose himself in emotion. When buddhi is weak, prajnaparadha arises — the error of reason in which knowledge does not pass into right action.

Sattvavajaya strengthens buddhi through knowledge, reflection, observation of consequences, the practice of right choice, restoration of smriti, and creation of a sattvic environment. Without buddhi, therapy of the mind is impossible, because it is buddhi that restores to the person the capacity to see and choose.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 10

Choose one situation in which you knew how to act correctly, but acted otherwise. Analyze it in writing: what reason knew; which object affected manas; which raga or dvesha proved stronger than discrimination; what ahamkara said; which smriti was lost; what the consequences were; and what small action could strengthen buddhi next time.

Review Questions

- How does buddhi differ from manas?
- Why must buddhi not be reduced to intellect?
- What is viveka, and why is it important for therapy?
- What does prajnaparadha mean?
- Why can a person know what is beneficial but choose what is harmful?
- How does raga distort buddhi?
- How does dvesha distort buddhi?
- How do the gunas influence the quality of buddhi?
- Why must buddhi be connected with dharma?
- By what means can buddhi be strengthened?

Brief Summary

Buddhi is the discriminating reason of the human being. It must see what is true and what is false, what is beneficial and what is harmful, what corresponds to dharma and what leads to dependence and suffering. Manas brings impressions and desires, but buddhi must determine the direction. When buddhi is obscured by the gunas, raga, dvesha, ahamkara, or the loss of smriti, prajnaparadha arises — the error of reason. Sattvavajaya Chikitsa strengthens buddhi so that a person can live not from impulse, fear, and self-deception, but from clarity, discrimination, and right action.

Chapter 11. Ahamkara: The Sense of “I” and the Mechanism of Appropriation

Key concepts: ahamkara, asmita, mamata, adhyasa, role.

After manas and buddhi, the book comes to ahamkara — to the place where experience begins to be lived as “mine” and “about me.” For the beginner, this chapter often becomes the first truly personal one, because here theory almost immediately meets resentment, shame, role, pride, and defense.

Ahamkara here is not the same as everyday “selfishness.” It is the function of appropriation. It is necessary for ordinary life, but it becomes a source of suffering when the temporary begins to be perceived as the essence of the human being. If the student understands this distinction, it will become much easier for him to recognize adhyasa in real complaints.

In Sattvavajaya, ahamkara is described as a function of the antahkarana that forms the sense of a separate “I” and connects experience with role, name, biography, and the habitual image of oneself; when ahamkara becomes excessive in power, every experience begins to revolve around self-defense, self-assertion, and painful control. This definition immediately shows the therapeutic task: not to destroy personality, but to weaken false appropriation, in which a person takes the changing to be himself.

11.1. Ahamkara as a Necessary Function of Personality

First, it is necessary to understand that ahamkara is not evil in itself. At the level of everyday life, a person needs a sense of “I.” He must distinguish his own body from another’s, his duties from another’s, his actions from external events, his speech from another person’s speech, his responsibility from another’s responsibility. Without ahamkara, a person would not be able to act in the world.

Ahamkara helps the child gradually separate from the primary fusion with the mother and the world. It forms the boundaries of personality, the ability to say “I,” “mine,” “I need,” “I want,” “I do not agree,” “I can,” “I am responsible.” In a healthy form, this is necessary. A person without a personal structure does not become enlightened; he becomes unstable, dependent, dissolved in another’s influence, or incapable of action.

Therefore, Sattvavajaya does not teach a primitive destruction of the ego. In therapeutic practice, this is especially important. If a person with a fragile personality, trauma, dependency, weak will, or damaged boundaries is told to “renounce the ego,” this can only increase confusion. First, his personal structure must become stable enough for him to discriminate, choose, take responsibility, and not dissolve in other people’s desires. Only then can deeper work with false identification begin.

In a healthy state, ahamkara is an instrument. It helps a person act, but it must not declare itself the highest center. It must serve buddhi, dharma, and consciousness, not subordinate them to itself.

11.2. When Ahamkara Becomes a Source of Suffering

Problems begin when ahamkara appropriates too much. It takes a temporary state and says: “This is me.” It takes a role and says: “This is my entire essence.” It takes another person’s opinion and says: “This is the measure of my value.” It takes trauma and says: “This is my destiny.” It takes success and says: “This is my true greatness.” It takes failure and says: “This is proof of my worthlessness.”

Thus false identity arises. The person no longer simply has a body; he becomes the body. He no longer simply has a profession; he becomes the profession. He no longer simply experiences an emotion; he becomes the emotion. He no longer simply remembers traumatic experience; he becomes the trauma. He no longer simply acts in a role; he becomes the role. Then any change in the object is experienced as a threat to existence itself.

For example, a person has lost a position. If the position was simply a function, this is painful, but survivable: he must recover, understand the causes, and look for a new path. But if ahamkara has fused with the position, the loss of work becomes an inner collapse: “I am nobody,” “I no longer exist,” “all my value has disappeared.” The external event is the same, but the depth of suffering depends on the degree of appropriation.

Or a person receives criticism. If buddhi is strong, criticism is considered as information: what is true in it, what is untrue, what can be improved. If ahamkara has painfully appropriated the image “I must be flawless,” criticism becomes an attack on the personality. Then manas becomes agitated, rajas raises defense, speech becomes sharp, and buddhi begins to justify the ego.

In this sense, ahamkara makes the world too personal. It turns objects into mirrors of one’s own value. Everything begins to answer the question: “What does this say about me?” It is precisely here that a large part of psychological pain is born.

11.3. Ahamkara and Adhyasa

Ahamkara is closely connected with adhyasa — false superimposition. Adhyasa arises when one thing is taken for another: a rope for a snake, the body for the Self, emotion for truth, role for essence, an object for the source of happiness. Ahamkara is the mechanism that makes this superimposition personal.

One may say that adhyasa shows the error of seeing, while ahamkara appropriates this error as “my reality.” For example, a person takes another person’s opinion as the measure of his own value. This is adhyasa. But when he says, “If I am not approved of, then I am worthless,” this is already the work of ahamkara. It has linked an external object with the inner “I.”

In the Vivekachudamani, it is emphasized that the primary cause of bondage is the arising of the false sense of ego, and that identification with ego obstructs liberation just as poison obstructs the health of the body. As long as a person takes the false construction of “I” to be himself, he inevitably suffers from everything that threatens this construction.

Sattvavajaya works with adhyasa through viveka and apavada. Viveka discriminates: this is the body, not the whole Self; this is a thought, not the Self; this is a role, not the Self; this is a feeling, not the Self; this is another person’s evaluation, not the Self. Apavada removes false superimposition. Then the object does not disappear, but it loses its power. The body remains the body, the role remains the role, the emotion remains the emotion, but they no longer occupy the place of the true center.

11.4. Ahamkara and Mamata: ‘I’ and ‘Mine’

Ahamkara is almost always connected with mamata — the sense of “mine.” Where “I” appears, “mine” quickly appears as well: my body, my name, my family, my profession, my idea, my status, my pain, my victory, my faith, my school, my student, my teacher, my book, my method. In itself, this is not always bad. On the everyday level, “mine” helps a person care, take responsibility, preserve, and develop. But when “mine” becomes rigid appropriation, it creates fear of loss and aggression of defense.

A person suffers not only because he has something, but because he inwardly fuses with it. The stronger mamata is, the stronger fear becomes. If “my property” becomes part of “my I,” the loss of property is experienced as the loss of oneself. If “my student” becomes an extension of my ahamkara, his independence is perceived as betrayal. If “my idea” becomes part of identity, any objection seems like an attack.

In therapeutic work, one must pay close attention to the words “mine” and “my.” They reveal zones of appropriation. Especially important are formulas such as “my person,” “my pain,” “my truth,” “my path,” “my status,” “my reputation,” “my trauma.” Sometimes healthy responsibility stands behind them, and sometimes a strong binding of ahamkara to an object.

Sattvavajaya does not demand an artificial rejection of all forms of “mine.” But it teaches one to see the degree of attachment. One can care for a child without the idea that he is an extension of one’s ahamkara. One can develop a project without dissolving one’s Self in its success. One can have a home, profession, relationships, and name, but not make them the absolute foundation of oneself.

11.5. Ahamkara and Role

Role is one of the most common forms of ahamkara. A person lives through roles: son, father, mother, teacher, physician, rector, student, specialist, man, woman, citizen, leader, author, therapist. Roles are necessary. Through them, dharma becomes concrete: the father has one set of duties, the teacher another, the physician a third, the student a fourth. The problem begins not with the role, but with identification with the role.

When a person fuses with a role, he ceases to be free within it. The teacher fears not knowing. The physician fears becoming ill. The psychologist fears showing his own vulnerability. The leader fears losing control. The spiritual person fears admitting anger or desire. The parent fears mistakes because the role of the “good parent” has become part of his value. The man fears weakness because the role of strength has become a prison. The woman fears aging because the role of attractiveness has become the center.

Sattvavajaya teaches that a role must be fulfilled, but it must not absorb the Self. This is a subtle distinction. One does not need to abandon roles. One must stop taking them as the final essence. In the Vivekachudamani, the image of an actor is given: he casts off the false physical “I” just as an actor casts off a role and remains himself. For the student, this is a very useful metaphor: the role is performed fully, but the actor does not forget that he is more than the role.

In practice, one can ask: what role am I defending right now? What will happen if this role changes? Who am I without it? Which duties of this role are real, and which demands have been invented by ahamkara?

11.6. Ahamkara and Trauma

One of the complex forms of false identification is identification with trauma. A person may indeed have experienced pain, humiliation, violence, loss, betrayal, rejection, or fear. Sattvavajaya must not devalue this. Traumatic experience can leave deep traces in chitta, the body, behavior, relationships, and the perception of the world. But the therapeutic task is that the person gradually ceases to be equal to his trauma.

When ahamkara appropriates trauma, the formula appears: “I am traumatized,” “I am broken,” “it is always like this with me,” “I cannot do otherwise,” “my pain is me.” Such an identity can provide an explanation, but at the same time it keeps the person in bondage. Trauma becomes not an event that left a trace, but the center of self-description.

Sattvavajaya must act very carefully here. One must not abruptly say to a person, “You are not your trauma,” if his psyche does not yet have support. First, safety must be created, manas must be stabilized, buddhi strengthened, smriti restored, and perhaps modern methods of trauma work and, when necessary, clinical help must be involved. But in the deeper perspective, the goal remains clear: the person must see that the traumatic trace exists in chitta, but it is not the final nature of the Self.

This approach does not cancel modern methods of trauma therapy. It gives them a deeper anthropological horizon. It is important to process the traumatic trace, but it is also important not to build an eternal identity around it.

11.7. Ahamkara and Spiritual Pride

A special danger arises in people engaged in spiritual practice, psychology, Ayurveda, yoga, teaching, or therapy. Ahamkara can appropriate even the path of liberation. Then a person begins to identify not with money or external beauty, but with the image of one who knows, who is pure, spiritual, special, initiated, and helping others. This is a subtler form of ego because it hides behind correct words.

Spiritual ahamkara manifests in this way: “I am above ordinary people,” “I see more deeply than everyone,” “I have already understood,” “my system is the only correct one,” “I no longer need to learn,” “criticism of me is the ignorance of others,” “my desires are spiritual, while others’ desires are low,” “I help, therefore I am right.” Outwardly, a person may speak of humility, while inwardly defending the image of his own exceptional nature.

For the Sattvavajaya specialist, this is a serious trap. The deeper the knowledge, the more honesty is needed. Ahamkara can use shastras, Sanskrit terms, the status of teacher, the role of therapist, and even the idea of Brahman for self-assertion. Therefore, buddhi must constantly check: am I now serving truth, or defending an image of myself? Am I helping the person, or do I want to be needed? Am I speaking from sattva, or from the desire for power? Do I recognize the limits of my competence, or am I covering pride with spiritual language?

True Sattvavajaya requires not only knowledge of terms, but purification of motive.

11.8. Ahamkara and Social Evaluation

Modern culture strongly intensifies ahamkara through constant evaluation. Social networks, ratings, likes, comments, photographs, professional statuses, public comparisons — all this creates an environment in which a person almost continuously sees his reflection in the eyes of others. Ahamkara receives constant food: “How do I look?”, “What do they think of me?”, “Am I successful enough?”, “Why does he have more?”, “Why was I not noticed?”

Thus dependence on the external mirror is formed. A person no longer feels his value directly. He needs confirmation. Praise lifts him up, criticism destroys him, and the absence of reaction makes him anxious. Manas constantly returns to the image of oneself. Buddhi weakens because decisions are made not according to dharma, but according to the expected reaction of the external field. Smriti is lost: the person forgets that his path is not equal to the evaluations of others.

Sattvavajaya works with this by returning the object to the place of an object. Another person’s opinion is an object. A like is an object. A comment is an object. A public image is an object. They may have practical significance, but they are not Atman and must not become the measure of the inner Self. This is not a call to ignore feedback. It is a call not to turn feedback into the source of one’s being.

Practically, periods of digital pratyahara, limitation of self-viewing, work with envy, a diary of real action, strengthening of dharma, and the question “What did I do today in essence, regardless of how it looks?” are useful here.

11.9. Ahamkara and the Sense of Doership

One of the main signs of ahamkara is the sense “I am the doer.” A person thinks: “I control everything,” “I create everything,” “I achieved this,” “I failed,” “I must hold the world together,” “without me everything will collapse.” This feeling can support responsibility, but when distorted it becomes a source of tension, pride, guilt, and fear.

The Bhagavad Gita says that actions are performed by the gunas of Prakriti, but a person deluded by ahamkara thinks, “I am the doer.” In the therapeutic sense, this means that a person often appropriates too much. He forgets that action arises from many conditions: body, upbringing, environment, time, gunas, karma, possibilities, the help of others, circumstances, prana, and the state of the mind. Ahamkara pulls action out of this network and says: “This is entirely mine.”

From this arise two extremes. In success — pride: “I did everything myself.” In failure — destructive guilt: “I have completely failed.” Sattvavajaya offers a more mature position: a person is responsible for his participation, intention, choice, and effort, but he does not appropriate absolute authorship of all results. This is especially important in working with attachment to the fruits of action.

Such an understanding does not make a person passive. On the contrary, it frees action from unnecessary tension. A person does what he must, but does not turn the result into proof of his own being.

11.10. Ahamkara and Relationships

In relationships, ahamkara manifests especially vividly. Another person becomes not simply another, but a mirror of my “I.” If he loves me, I am valuable. If he withdraws, I am rejected. If he disagrees, he does not respect me. If he chooses himself, he betrays me. If he praises me, I exist. If he criticizes me, I collapse.

Thus relationships become a field of adhyasa. Love mixes with appropriation. Care mixes with control. Closeness mixes with dependence. Fidelity mixes with possession. The freedom of the other becomes a threat. Jealousy often arises precisely where ahamkara considers the other person part of “mine.” Then the other ceases to be an independent subject and becomes an object supporting my identity.

Sattvavajaya does not call for cold detachment. It does not deny love, attachment in the healthy sense, family, fidelity, tenderness, or responsibility. But it distinguishes love from appropriation. Love sees the other as a living being. Ahamkara sees the other as a function of my state. Love wishes good. Ahamkara wants control. Love can be connected with dharma. Ahamkara revolves around “mine.”

A practical question in relationships is this: am I seeing the other person now, or only my need through him? Am I loving or appropriating? Am I speaking with the person, or with my fear of loss? Do I want closeness, or confirmation of my own value?

11.11. Ahamkara and Defensive Reactions

When ahamkara feels threatened, defensive reactions arise. A person justifies himself, attacks, denies, devalues, blames, withdraws into silence, demonstrates superiority, plays the victim, or begins to prove himself. These reactions can be quick and almost automatic. Manas receives a signal, ahamkara sees a threat to the image of “I,” rajas or tamas rises, and buddhi loses clarity.

Defensive reactions are not always false. Sometimes a person truly needs to defend himself. But Sattvavajaya teaches the distinction between defense of dharma and defense of ahamkara. Defense of dharma is calmer, more precise, and does not require humiliating the other. Defense of ahamkara is hot, painful, obsessive. It wants not so much truth as the restoration of its image.

Signs of the defense of ahamkara include the inability to acknowledge partial truth in the other’s words, the desire to respond immediately, bodily tension, repeated justifications, inner heat, resentment at the very fact of a remark, and the urge to win rather than understand. Signs of a buddhic response include a pause, the ability to hear, separation of fact from evaluation, recognition of one’s own part, and clear setting of boundaries without destroying the other.

For practice, a simple pause is useful: “What is being defended in me right now?” This question often returns buddhi.

11.12. Weakening the Power of Ahamkara

Sattvavajaya weakens the power of ahamkara not through self-humiliation, but through discrimination. Self-humiliation is also a form of ahamkara. A person says, “I am worthless,” but still revolves around “I.” Pride and self-humiliation may be two sides of the same attachment to the image of oneself. In both cases, the center is occupied by ahamkara.

The weakening of ahamkara begins with observation: where do I appropriate? Where do I react too painfully? Where do I defend an image? Where do I take a role for myself? Where do I need confirmation? Where am I unable to admit error? Where do I consider another person my property? Where do I confuse responsibility and control?

The second step is the return to buddhi: what here is fact, and what is a story about myself? What truly needs to be done? What corresponds to dharma? Which object have I made the center? What will happen if I do not receive confirmation?

The third step is the practice of smriti: to remember that I am deeper than role, emotion, success, criticism, body, desire, and fear. This must not be an empty phrase. Smriti is strengthened through regular self-observation and action without excessive appropriation.

The fourth step is service and action without attachment to fruits. When a person acts for the sake of dharma, benefit, truth, help, and learning, and not only for the strengthening of the image of himself, ahamkara gradually loses power. It remains an instrument, but ceases to be the center.

11.13. Diagnosis of Ahamkara

In practical work, ahamkara can be diagnosed by several signs.

The first sign is the painful intensity of the reaction. The more strongly a person reacts to an object, the more likely it is that the object is connected with identity. The second is the recurring formula “I am like this” or “I am not like that.” The third is the inability to separate an action from oneself: “If I made a mistake, then I am bad.” The fourth is dependence on external confirmation. The fifth is fear of losing a role. The sixth is constant comparison. The seventh is defensive aggression in response to criticism. The eighth is appropriation of another person. The ninth is pride in knowledge or spirituality. The tenth is the inability to say: “I was mistaken.”

A simple therapeutic question may be used: “What exactly here has become part of your ‘I’?” If a person speaks about work, relationships, the body, trauma, status, opinion, or success, this question helps locate the knot of adhyasa.

Another question is: “Who are you afraid of becoming if this disappears?” The answer reveals hidden identity. For example: “If I lose my status, I am nobody”; “If I am not loved, I have no value”; “If I make a mistake, I am unworthy of respect”; “If I do not control, I will be destroyed.” Here ahamkara becomes visible.

11.14. Ahamkara on the Empirical and Highest Levels

It is important to distinguish levels. On the empirical level, vyavaharika, that is, the level of practical life, ahamkara is needed. A person learns to have healthy boundaries, responsibility, personal stability, and the ability to act. On this level, one must not prematurely say: “The ego is illusory, therefore nothing matters.” Such a phrase can become spiritual bypassing.

On the highest level, paramarthika, that is, the level of ultimate truth, ahamkara is not final reality. In a strict non-dual framework, only Brahman is the absolute foundation; everything else belongs to the level of pedagogical, therapeutic, and practical discrimination. Therefore, in paramarthika, only Brahman appears as the non-dual foundation, while Atman as the experienced “I,” manas, buddhi, ahamkara, chitta, the gunas, indriyas, raga, dvesha, karma — the causal connectedness of action — samskaras, and vasanas are considered on the level of vyavaharika for the purposes of pedagogy and therapy.

This distinction protects against confusion. On the practical level, we work with ahamkara as a real function of personality. On the highest level, we do not take it to be the final essence. Sattvavajaya must be able to hold both levels: not to destroy personality prematurely, but also not to turn it into an absolute.

11.15. Conclusion of the Chapter

Ahamkara is the function of self-reference, the sense of a separate “I,” and the mechanism of appropriating experience. In a healthy form, it helps a person act, have boundaries, take responsibility, and live in the world. In a distorted form, it appropriates the body, role, emotion, trauma, success, opinion, relationships, and the fruit of action as the very essence of the person. Then adhyasa, fear of loss, dependence on evaluation, painful defense, jealousy, pride, guilt, and suffering arise.

Sattvavajaya does not violently destroy ahamkara, but returns it to its proper place. Through viveka, smriti, buddhi, pratyahara, service, action without attachment, and observation of appropriation, a person gradually ceases to be a slave of temporary identities. He preserves personality as an instrument, but less and less takes it to be the highest Self.

Practical Assignment for Chapter 11

Choose one situation in which you felt strongly offended, frightened, defensive, envious, jealous, or ashamed. Analyze it in writing: what fact occurred; what manas said; what ahamkara appropriated; which role or identity was threatened; which raga or dvesha was activated; what buddhi could have seen; how the object can be returned to the place of an object; and what action would correspond to dharma.

Review Questions

- What is ahamkara in Vedic psychology?
- Why is ahamkara not evil in itself?
- When does ahamkara become a source of suffering?
- How is ahamkara connected with adhyasa?
- What is mamata, and how does it strengthen attachment?
- Why can role become a trap of identity?
- How can trauma become part of the false “I”?
- What is spiritual ahamkara?
- How can one distinguish defense of dharma from defense of ahamkara?
- How does Sattvavajaya weaken the power of ahamkara?

Brief Summary

Ahamkara creates the sense of “I” and connects experience with personality. It is necessary for ordinary life, but becomes a source of suffering when it appropriates temporary objects as the essence of the human being. The body, role, status, trauma, success, relationships, another person’s opinion, and the fruit of action can become false centers of identity. Sattvavajaya teaches one to distinguish the true Self from temporary self-descriptions, weaken painful appropriation, and return ahamkara to the position of an instrument, not the ruler of inner life.

Chapter 12. Chitta, Samskaras, and Vasanas: The Memory That Governs the Present

Key concepts: chitta, samskara, vasana, smriti, repetition.

After manas, buddhi, and ahamkara, the book turns to chitta. For the student, this is the chapter about why a person often reacts not only to the present, but also to an already accumulated inner trace. It is chitta that explains why a complaint may be “from today,” while its force is much older than the current event.

The simplest way to read chitta is as the field of deep memory. But this is not only memory of facts. Emotional imprints, bodily reactions, the taste of pleasure, the trace of pain, habitual patterns of defense, and the tendency toward repetition are preserved here. This understanding immediately makes both samskaras and vasanas comprehensible.

In Sattvavajaya, chitta is described as the deep layer of the mind in which samskaras, vasanas, memories, and desires are stored; when chitta is polluted, old impressions rise into consciousness, create associations, images, desires, and fears, and attention begins to jump chaotically from one object to another. This is a very precise description of why it is sometimes difficult for a person to “simply be attentive.” Attention slips away not only because of weak will, but because there are already accumulated traces within that pull the mind in their old directions.

12.1. Chitta as a Field of Traces

Chitta may be compared to soil. Everything a person experiences leaves seeds in it. Some seeds dry out quickly and do not sprout. Others lie unnoticed for a long time, but under suitable conditions begin to grow. Some seeds are beneficial: kind experience, knowledge, discipline, prayer, care, honesty, inspiration, meeting a teacher, right action. They make the inner soil fertile. Other seeds become sources of suffering: traumas, resentments, fears, envy, dependence, recurring fantasies, shame, experienced humiliation, betrayal, the habit of self-deception, and many years of wrong behavior.

A person often thinks that he freely chooses his reaction in the present. But Sattvavajaya shows that the present is experienced through accumulated traces. One person hears criticism and calmly clarifies what can be improved. Another hears similar words and instantly feels shame, rage, or the desire to disappear. Why? Because the current sound has touched an old trace in chitta. One person sees another's success and rejoices. Another feels envy and inferiority. The object may be the same, but chitta is different.

Therefore, in Sattvavajaya one cannot work only with a superficial thought. Thought is often the top of a deeper trace. A person says: "I am afraid to speak in public." But behind this phrase there may stand an old samskara of humiliation, a strict parent, school experience of ridicule, the habit of comparing oneself, ahamkara connected with the image of flawlessness, and a vasana of avoidance. If one works only with the thought "I am afraid," one may obtain a temporary result. If chitta is seen, therapy becomes deeper.

12.2. Samskara: The Imprint of Experience

Samskara is an imprint left by an action, experience, thought, emotion, or repeated contact with an object. Everything a person does and experiences does not disappear without a trace. Even if an event is forgotten at the level of ordinary memory, its trace may remain as an inclination, bodily response, emotional tone, habitual reaction, or unconscious expectation.

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